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CONTENTS

25 March 1992

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

FRONT PAGE

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Asked To Take Lockerbie Suspects [Paris Radio Monte Carlo]	2
League Not 'Officially' Informed [MENA]	2
Arab League Committee Departs for Libya [Cairo Radio]	2
Arrives in Tripoli [Tripoli TV]	2
Meets With al-Qadhafi [Cairo Radio]	2
'Abd-al-Majid Comments [MENA]	3
Commentary Hails Efforts To Avert Libyan Crisis [Cairo Radio]	3
UN's Ghali Notes Resolutions on Libya, Iraq [MENA]	4
Arab League Urged To Oppose Sanctions on Libya [AL-QUDS 24 Mar]	4
Arab League 'Appreciates' PRC Stance on Libya [SANA]	5

Palestinian Affairs

'Ashraf'—'No Objection' to Rome Talks Venue [Amman Radio]	5
Goals of Territories' Political Committees Defined [AL-FAJR 22 Mar]	5
PNSF Criticizes 'Campaign' Against Libya [Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio]	5
'Arafat, Libya's al-Qadhafi Confer in Tripoli [JANA]	6

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Foreign Military Action in Libya Rejected [KUNA]	7
Boudiaf on FIS Dissolution, Domestic Changes [APS]	7
Higher State Council on Domestic, Diplomatic Issues [Algiers TV]	8
Information Council Stresses Press Freedom [Algiers Radio]	8
Italy Extends Loan to Young Entrepreneurs Program [APS]	8

Egypt

Ministry Official on Libya, 'New World Order' [MENA]	8
Sidqi Announces Pay Hike for Government Workers [Cairo Radio]	9
Commercial Offices in Algeria, Libya To Reopen [Algiers Radio]	10

Libya

Arab League Holding Suspects Pending ICJ Ruling [Paris Radio Monte Carlo]	10
Al-Buhari Discusses Sanctions, Terrorism [MENA]	10
Maghreb Foreign Ministers To Visit New York [Algiers Radio]	11
Washington Seen Forcing Arab Region To 'Kneel' [Algiers Radio]	11
Western Pressure Likened to 'New Crusade' [JANA]	12
Iranian Ambassador Seen Supporting Libya [MENA]	12
Libya-Iran Flights Planned [JANA]	13

Sudan

Libyan, Chinese, Iranian Presence in South Denied [MENA]	13
Army Spokesman Denies Southern Offensive [SUNA]	13
Communique Terms Visit by Kenya's Moi 'Success' [SUNA]	13
Islamic Front Leader on Ties With Egypt, Iran [MISR AL-FATAH 16 Mar]	14

Tunisia

President, Libyan Official View Lockerbie Issue [JANA]	16
--	----

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Saudi Arabia

Council Reduces Charges for State Goods, Services [SPA]	17
---	----

IRAQ

Saddam Reportedly Admits Desert Storm 'Mistakes' [Voice of the Iraqi People]	18
U.S. Imposes 'Pressure' on Oil Export Issue [Baghdad Radio]	18
IAEA Demands Nuclear Site's Partial Destruction [AFP]	19
UN Inspectors View Destroyed Ballistic Missiles [AFP]	19
UN Official on Chemical Missiles [AFP]	19
Column Criticizes Motives of Opposition [AL-IRAQ 18 Mar]	20
Private Bank To Open, Aid Development Plans [INA]	20
*Saddam Refuses To Permit PLO Broadcast [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 18 Mar]	21

ISRAEL

'Amazement' at U.S. Silence on Patriot Report [Jerusalem Radio]	22
'Insolence' Not To Publish Results [HADASHOT 25 Mar]	22
Levi To Visit Japan in Two Weeks [Jerusalem TV]	22
Rabin Rejects U.S. 'Dictate' on Construction [Jerusalem Radio]	22
Drop of Convertible U.S. Military Aid Feared [AL HAMISHMAR 25 Mar]	23
Chinese Delegation Denies Technology Transfer [Jerusalem Radio]	23
Senior EC Team To Discuss Role in Arms Talks [Jerusalem TV]	23
EC Role 'Not Categorically Rejected' [Jerusalem Radio]	23
Large Group of Arabs Inducted Into Military [Jerusalem Radio]	23

JORDAN

Foreign Minister on Arab League, Beirut Meetings [Amman TV]	24
Invitation to Coordination Meeting Accepted [Amman TV]	24
Delegation Member on U.S. Role in Peace Talks [AL-DUSTUR 25 Mar]	24
'Reemergence of Arab Solidarity' Praised [AL-RAY 23 Mar]	24
Compromise Seen as 'Much Worse' for Libya [AL-DUSTUR 25 Mar]	25
Finnish Defense Minister Meets With Bin-Shakir [Amman Radio]	25
Received by Joint Chiefs Chairman [Amman Radio]	25

LEBANON

Syrian Presence in Beirut Reduced Following Clash [Beirut Radio]	26
Security Stepped Up for Hizballah Officials [Beirut Radio]	26
Birri Criticizes Government, Demands Change [RFL]	26
Al-Hirawi Interviewed on Foreign Aid, Economy [London AL-HAWADITH 20 Mar]	26
Defense Minister on Obstacles to Army Deployment [VOL]	28
Buwayz on Damascus Talks, Election Prospects [VOL]	28
Buwayz on Peace Talks, Arab Coordination [Beirut Radio]	29
Buwayz Regrets 'Fall of Innocent Victims' [Beirut Radio]	29
Minister Calls for 'Radical Government Change' [Beirut Radio]	29

Man Arrested Smuggling Documents to Libya [Beirut Radio]	30
Army Fires on Israeli Gunboats Near Sidon [VOM]	30

SYRIA

Al-Asad Confers With Lebanese Officials 24 Mar [Damascus Radio]	31
Chief Delegate on UN Role in Peace Talks [AL-ITTIHAD 23 Mar]	31
Assembly Endorses Nonproliferation Safeguards [Damascus Radio]	31
Khaddam, Talas Receive Finnish Defense Minister [Damascus TV]	32
Gen Talas Receives Irish Defense Minister [Damascus Radio]	32

SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh

'Fear of Violence' After Rightist's Arrest [AFP]	33
Army on Alert; War With Burma Ruled Out [AFP]	33
DPRK Economic Minister Arrives in Dhaka [Dhaka Radio]	34
Joint Economic Commission Established [Dhaka Radio]	34

India

BJP Says CPI Received \$500,000 From KGB [Delhi Radio]	34
CPI Denies Receiving Funds [Delhi Radio]	35
4 Pakistani Troops Killed in Kashmir Shooting [Delhi Radio]	35
Spokesman Discusses Talks With Israeli Official [ISI]	35
Foreign Investment Allowed in Capital Market [Delhi TV]	35

Iran

Nationwide Majles Elections Scheduled for 10 April	35
Breakdown of Majles Seats Per Province [IRNA]	35
75 Withdraw From Elections [IRNA]	36
Minority Candidates Register [IRNA]	36
10,000 To Oversee Elections [Tehran Radio]	36
Security Teams To Supervise Polls [Tehran TV]	36
Elections 'Artificial, Superficial' [Voice of Iranian Kurdistan]	37
Karrubi on Electoral Rivalries [London AL-MAJALLAH 18-24 Mar]	37
*Restrictions on Candidates Noted [SALAM 18 Feb]	38
Editorial: Tension With Switzerland Continues [TEHRAN TIMES INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY 12 Mar]	38
Russian Muslim Revival Program Shown in Iran [IRNA]	39
German 'Smear Campaign' on Islam Advocate Seen [IRNA]	39

Pakistan

Defense Ministry Confirms Border Skirmish [AFP]	40
Paper Criticizes UN Statements on Kashmir [THE MUSLIM 23 Mar]	40
Delegation Seeking Japanese Help on Kashmir [Tokyo KYODO]	40
UN Representative on Afghanistan Briefs Sharif [Islamabad Radio]	41
Explosions Damage Gas Pipelines in South [AFP]	41
Explosions Shut Pipelines [Radio Pakistan]	41
Paper Views Problems With Exchange Certificates [THE NATION 23 Mar]	41
Further on Exchange 'Scandal' [THE MUSLIM 23 Mar]	42
Economic Mismanagement Cited [THE FRONTIER POST 23 Mar]	42
Khan, Sharif Address Nation on Pakistan Day [Islamabad Radio]	43

Libya

The ambassador to Brussels stated that the two Lockerbie defendants will be placed "at the disposal" of the Arab League in Libya to await a ruling by the International Court of Justice, but he denied that they will be "handed over," Radio Monte Carlo reported. The Arab Maghreb Union foreign ministers will soon leave for Tripoli and then New York to draw up "practical arrangements" for implementing the handover of the two suspects, Algiers radio observed. Jordan's foreign minister told Amman television in an interview that the Arab foreign ministers who met in Cairo sought to find "middle ground" between the Libyan and the U.S.-UK-French positions. The secretary for external liaison "categorically denied reports that Libya sponsors or supports terrorism" and declared that Tripoli "has no dispute with the United States or the West," MENA noted.

Iraq

The clandestine Voice of the Iraqi People stated that Saddam recently called a meeting of "senior party cadres" in al-Basrah where he "for the first time" said "we must admit that we were sometimes wrong in our handling of the crisis and the war." Continuing, the radio noted Saddam's announcement that Tariq 'Aziz will head a "special commission to write about the war's complicated issues" whose report will be converted into a history book.

Israel

Senior defense sources expressed "amazement" at the State Department's announcement that it has no intention of publishing the report by the U.S. teams currently investigating the transfer of Patriot missiles or parts from Israel to other countries without permission. Jerusalem radio reported. Senior security officials added that it would be "insolence" not to publish these reports which would prove that the U.S. allegations are "baseless," HADASHOT noted. Levi is to visit Japan in two weeks as part of Tokyo's "recent" efforts to improve ties and become more involved in the peace process, Jerusalem television observed.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian peace negotiators have "no objection" to moving the peace talks to Rome, as proposed by the Italian Senate president, if "significant progress" in the talks is made, Amman radio reported.

Lebanon

The Syrian Army has reduced its presence in Beirut in the last 24 hours and has removed most of its roadblocks, Beirut radio noted. Meanwhile, security has been increased for Hizballah officials due to possible Israeli retaliation following the bombing of that country's Buenos Aires embassy, the radio continued.

Sudan

Al-Bashir denied the presence of Libyan, Chinese, and Iranian forces in the southern part of the country, MENA stated.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Asked To Take Lockerbie Suspects

JN2403122892 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1200 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Text] 'Ali al-Turayki, Libya's permanent Arab League representative, has submitted a petition to Arab League Secretary General 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid this morning, requesting the Arab League to receive the two Libyan defendants. Arab League sources stressed that the secretary general held an emergency meeting with the seven-member committee made up of the Arab Maghreb states, Egypt, and Syria in order to discuss this request.

The secretary general will shortly leave for Libya to discuss the Libyan request with the Libyan officials. It seems that the Arab League has approved the Libyan request. The sources, however, indicated that Libya may ask the Arab League to be a party to the trial that will take place in Scotland.

League Not 'Officially' Informed

NC2403131692 Cairo MENA in Arabic GMT
1208 24 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—The seven-member committee formed by the ministerial emergency session of the Arab League Council is to leave for the Libyan capital Tripoli today to discuss the Libyan-Western crisis.

Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, who made the announcement today, said the visit comes at the invitation of Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution.

He emphasized that the Arab countries want to solve the U.S.-British-French crisis with Libya peacefully, adding that Sunday's Arab League emergency session resolution made this clear.

Asked about the handover of two Libyans to the Arab League, 'Abd-al-Majid said: I have no answer to that question. We heard the news through the Arab League's delegate in New York. We were not told about it officially.

Arab League Committee Departs for Libya

NC2403154492 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio
Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] The seven-member Egyptian [as heard] committee in charge of following up the dispute between Libya and the United States, Britain, and France left Cairo for Libya this afternoon at the invitation of brother leader Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi.

Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid chairs the committee, which includes Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben

Yahya; Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali; the Mauritanian foreign minister; and the Algerian, Syrian, and Libyan permanent delegates to the Arab League.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid held a press conference at the conclusion of the seven-member committee's meeting in Cairo earlier today, saying that the committee discussed the latest developments in the crisis. He added that the visit to Libya was scheduled so the committee would meet with brother Colonel al-Qadhafi to discuss the necessary procedures for handing over the two Libyans accused of downing a U.S. airliner.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said the Arab League is eager to find a peaceful solution to the problem, pointing out that the Libyan agreement [to hand over the defendants] was conveyed to the UN secretary general yesterday.

Arrives in Tripoli

LD2403215592 Tripoli Libyan Television Network
in Arabic 2030 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Excerpts] The ministerial committee, which was set up by the Arab Foreign Ministers' Council at their emergency meeting in Cairo on 22 March, arrived in Tripoli this evening. [passage omitted]

The committee is composed, as stipulated in Paragraph 5 of the resolution of the Arab Foreign Ministers' Council, of members from Tunisia, Algeria, the Great Jamahiriyyah, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, and Mauritania, and the secretary general of the Arab League. Its task is to make all the necessary and urgent contacts with the parties concerned, with the aim of finding a solution to the crisis in accordance with the provisions of the UN charter and the principles of international law.

Meets With al-Qadhafi

NC2503073292 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt
Radio Network in Arabic 0520 GMT 25 Mar 92

[From the "Press Review" Program]

[Text] AL-AHRAM reports that the Arab League Council's seven-member ministerial committee on the Libyan crisis met with Libyan leader Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi and discussed details of handing over two Libyan suspects implicated in blowing up a U.S. plane. The delegation's brief visit to Tripoli began yesterday at the invitation of the Libyan leader.

The paper adds that talks dealt with how the Arab League would treat the two suspects in implementing Security Council Resolution 731, the party to conduct the trial, the venue of the trial, and the Arab League's role in the process.

'Abd-al-Majid Comments

NC2503082792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0731 GMT
25 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid and Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa returned to Cairo from Tripoli early this morning. As part of the seven-member committee formed by the Arab League's recent ministerial council meeting, they consulted with Libyan officials on the procedures for handing over two Libyans suspected of blowing up a U.S. plane in 1988.

In an arrival statement, 'Abd-al-Majid said that the committee had met with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi and described the meeting as important.

He added that consultations are continuing among the Arab League, the seven-member committee, and Libyan officials.

Replying to a question on whether he has any Libyan guarantees, or on the truth of Libya's announcement of handing over the two suspects, 'Abd-al-Majid said consultations on further details are continuing.

He added that he will contact UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali to notify him of the situation.

The ambassadors of Syria, Tunisia, and Algeria returned with 'Abd-al-Majid on the same flight, while other members of the seven-member committee left Tripoli for their countries.

Upon their arrival in Tripoli yesterday evening, 'Abd-al-Majid and the seven-member committee members met with Major 'Abd-al-Salam Jallud for three hours, during which they discussed the Libyan-Western crisis in light of the resolution passed by the Arab League Council's emergency ministerial session on

Commentary Hails Efforts To Avert Libyan Crisis

NC2403162792 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio
Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Commentary by Ahmad Sha'ban: "United Arab Support For The Libyan Stand Characterized By Courage and Flexibility"]

[Text] In a group decision made by the Arab foreign ministers at the conclusion of their meetings in Cairo, the foreign ministers clearly condemned terrorism and welcomed Libya's readiness to cooperate with any international effort to put an end to this phenomenon. The Arab ministers also renewed their call to the Security Council to settle the Libyan-Western crisis legally and through negotiations. The Arab foreign ministers also urged the Security Council not to issue any resolution containing economic or military measures which could hurt the region before investigations conclude.

Both during the foreign ministers meeting and after the decision was issued, extensive diplomatic contacts took

place between Cairo and Tripoli in an attempt to find a way out of the crisis that would not create problems for Libya or the countries in the region if the Security Council issues such a resolution.

These efforts, in addition to Egypt's efforts, and the meeting Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa had with Arab ministers seeking a reasonable solution, lead to the emergence of a Libyan stand characterized by courage, flexibility, and objectivity. Reports indicate that Libya has agreed to hand over the two suspects to the Arab League. Reports also indicate that the Libyan delegate to the United Nations has said that Libya is ready to have the suspects tried in any U.S., British, or French court. This step, taken by Libya after having received complete Arab support for its stand, clearly indicates to the entire world that all Arabs are opposed to terrorism and that the Arabs are united and their words are as one in supporting legitimate Arab rights. The Arab countries take a united stand alongside Libya today and declare their confidence in the Libyan stand which rejects terrorism and responds to international legitimacy, something all Arabs believe in and support. Needless to say, the Arabs condemned the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, considering it a form of state terrorism. This also confirms that the Arabs reject terrorism regardless of its form or shape, even if it springs from an Arab nation. The Arabs are working for peace and reject terrorism. At the same time, they adhere to their rights and will not relinquish even one.

The activities of the Arabs and their policy of dealing with the various world countries falls within this framework. In the same way, they are setting up bridges of dialogue with the entire world to reach beneficial results for Arabs and all other world peoples.

Arab diplomacy has recently led to the postponing of a Security Council resolution against Libya. Here we need to point out the Egyptian efforts exerted since this crisis began and the role President Husni Mubarak has played, whether through his negotiations and contacts with Libyan officials or through his contacts with the countries concerned with the issue. These contacts enabled him to stop an expected attack on Libya. Egyptian diplomacy, as a result of its international credibility and international political influence, played a prominent and effective role in stopping the deterioration of the Libyan-Western crisis, keeping it within the realm of dialogue and understanding, and abiding by the verdicts of the international judicial authority.

Once again we reiterate that the Arabs, through their dealings with the world, and Libya in particular have affirmed their condemnation of violence. It is the world's turn now to realize this fact and proceed from this basis in its dealings. It is in everybody's interest to solve all the world's problems, a huge part of which deal with the Middle East.

UN's Ghali Notes Resolutions on Libya, Iraq

NC2403125992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1147 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Ghali has stated that a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement cannot be achieved without the UN. In an interview with the newspaper AL-AKHBAR, published today, Ghali said that Israel's participation in the bilateral talks with the Arab sides does not free it of its commitments and obligations to the UN Charter and its implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. He added that UN Security Council Resolution 242 on the Middle East cannot be implemented by force because it is not based on Chapter Seven of the UN Charter. It can only be implemented if all the parties agree.

Asked whether this interpretation undermines the importance of the resolution, which is sacrosanct because it forms the basis for the attempts to settle the Middle East problem, Ghali said: On the contrary, this is merely a legal description of the resolution. Its bases for a comprehensive Middle East settlement are sound and fair.

Ghali noted that the UN Security Council resolutions on Iraq and Libya stipulate their implementation by force [as received] because they are based on Chapter Seven of the Charter.

Ghali said the United Nations did not set any date or time limit for Iraq to implement the resolutions. He hoped the Iraqi authorities would accept all the UN terms because Iraq does not want to enter a confrontation with the UN Security Council.

On the proposal to set up an economic security council to discuss world economic development issues, Ghali said that when he meets the head of the UN agencies in Geneva on 8 April he will review the United Nations economic and social role before submitting a report to the Economic and Social Council in June.

On the United Nations role in the new world order, Ghali said UN member states will provide the order's framework. The United Nations will merely be a platform for discussing the subject.

Arab League Urged To Oppose Sanctions on Libya

TA2403184492 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic
24 Mar 92 p 7

[Editorial: "The Arab League and the Libyan Crisis"]

[Text] At the end of its extraordinary meeting held Sunday evening upon Libya's request, the Arab League ministerial council called on the UN Security Council "to avoid adopting economic, military, or diplomatic measures against Libya," preferring to resolve by means of negotiation and mediation the current dispute between Libya and the United States, Britain, and France over the explosion of the Lockerbie plane and

that of a French plane three years ago. This call came against the background of threats issued by the United States, Britain, and France against Libya and their attempt to have the Security Council adopt a resolution imposing economic and military sanctions on Libya so that it would hand over two of its citizens accused of involvement in the explosions of the two Western planes.

This timid call by the Arab League ministerial council, in which it asked the UN Security Council "to deliberate" before adopting a resolution to impose sanctions, proves the degree of weakness that has afflicted the Arab stance regarding pan-Arab issues in the wake of the crisis and the Gulf War. Arab differences over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait about one and a half years ago and the resulting political and military polarization that led to the destructive war in the Gulf prevented the League's council in its extraordinary session from adopting a firmer decision or stance regarding the threats to use military force and economic sanctions against the Libyan people.

If we can find reasons and justifications for Arab differences over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on the basis that Iraq occupied another independent Arab state, which is a member of the Arab League and the United Nations, thus endangering international and regional security and refusing to comply with Security Council resolutions calling on it to withdraw, we do not see any justification for not adopting a unified Arab position in support of Libya in its current crisis. The Libyan crisis, in its nature and international and Arab dimensions, differs from the Gulf crisis that resulted from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

The current dispute between Libya and the United States, Britain, and France arose basically from "private investigations" conducted by American, French, and British circles about the explosion of the above-mentioned two planes a few years ago. Those investigations, whose results were not announced, ended by pointing accusing fingers at "Libyan agents" and by demanding that the Libyan Government hand over the accused to judicial authorities in the United States or Britain to stand trial. Although there is no agreement between them to hand over the accused, Libya showed great readiness to cooperate in resolving the dispute within the framework of the rules of international law. It would have been possible, in fact, to resolve the dispute by diplomatic means if the three countries had adhered to the rules of international law which regulates relations between governments in such a case instead of using the UN Security Council as a cover to settle political accounts with the Libyan regime.

Hence, the Arab League should stand firmly against any possible decision by the Security Council to impose sanctions on Libya. Moreover, Libya should be supported in its current dispute with the United States, Britain, and France not only on the basis of "support your brother be he oppressor or oppressed," or because these governments use two different standards when dealing with "international legitimacy," but because such a stance by the Arab League at this very time will

help it regain its prestige and credibility as an authority for resolving Arab problems. This will constitute a good beginning for it to deal with the structure of the new world order whose ugly outlines began to appear during and after the Gulf war.

Arab League 'Appreciates' PRC Stance on Libya

JN2403170592 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1520 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (SANA)—Adnan 'Umran, Arab League assistant secretary general for political affairs, conferred with the Chinese ambassador in Cairo, given that China is a permanent member of the Security Council.

Discussions during the meeting dealt with the threats against Libya.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, the Chinese ambassador said his country believes that no sanctions should be imposed on Libya and hopes that the Libyan crisis will be solved through peaceful means.

The Chinese ambassador said the use of force against Libya would only increase tension in the region.

For his part, 'Umran said in a statement to a SANA correspondent that the Arab League appreciates the Chinese position which supports Arab causes at international forums.

He stressed that the Arab league believes that it is a grave mistake when some parties adopt resolutions imposing economic sanctions on Libya, thus viewing and using Chapter 7 of the UN Charter out of context.

'Umran added: The rules outlined in Chapter 7 should have been applied on Israel 25 years ago after its occupation of Arab territories during its aggression of 1967.

Palestinian Affairs

'Ashrawi—'No Objection' to Rome Talks Venue

JN2403180392 Amman Radio Jordan in English
1700 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Palestinian peace negotiators said today they had no objection to Italian Senate President Giovanni Spadolini's proposal to eventually move Arab-Israeli peace talks from Washington to Rome.

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan 'Ashrawi said Spadolini was in favor of moving the negotiations to Italy, and Palestinians of course encouraged and supported that idea. She added they have no objection in principle to

the idea and that Palestinians favor it after achieving significant progress in the talks.

Goals of Territories' Political Committees Defined

TA2403150092 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic
22 Mar 92 pp 1, 11

[Text] Ramallah—The preparatory committee of the political action committees will end its work after completing its task in the middle of April. The aims of these committees have been defined as advancing the peace process as well as the negotiating process on the basis of awareness, objectivity, and firm Palestinian principles. The aims are summed up as follows:

1. Creating objective interaction with the Palestinian masses in the occupied territories by conveying their inclinations, views, and demands to the Palestinian political decisionmakers.
2. Fostering conscious support for the Palestinian political decision, deepening the awareness of the masses concerning the decision and its aims, and forging objective participation in and influencing the formulation of this decision.
3. Mobilizing the masses by planning and organizing their capabilities and options in order to safeguard Palestinian national constants and attain the firm national goals.
4. Centralizing political action in the occupied territories and maintaining the unity of the militant stand by addressing the requirements and developments of the political stage through pursuit, guidance, and instruction.
5. Working to gather all national potential with the aim of supporting and protecting Palestinian national unity.
6. Consolidating relations among various national institutions and organizations and coordinating with them, and considering the political committees as a militant means required by the nature of the phase while not constituting a substitute for any other militant device.
7. Supporting the credibility of the Palestinian political decision on the Israeli street and through Israeli institutions, and creating an effective relationship with the peace camp and progressive forces inside Israel.
8. Supporting the credibility of the Palestinian political decision in international forums and to world public opinion.

PNSF Criticizes 'Campaign' Against Libya

JN2403184392 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] The Palestinian National Salvation Front [PNSF] today issued a statement on the unfair Western campaign against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyyah which said

that the U.S. attempt cannot conceal its aggressive objective regardless of how many pretexts it fabricates.

'Arafat, Libya's al-Qadhdhafi Confer in Tripoli

*LD2003152692 Tripoli JANA in English 1417 GMT
20 Mar 92*

[Text] Tripoli al-Rabi' [March] 20, (JANA)—The leader of the revolution yesterday received the president of Palestine

Yasir 'Arafat with whom he conducted talks on current Arab and international affairs within the context of bilateral consultations.

President 'Arafat had the sahur [Ramadan last meal before daybreak] meal with the leader of the revolution.

President 'Arafat and his accompanying delegation left Tripoli last night and were seen off at the airport by Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi.

Algeria

Foreign Military Action in Libya Rejected

LD2403133292 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1207 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Algiers, 24 Mar (KUNA)—Algeria has expressed its rejection of any foreign military intervention in Libya. An authorized Algerian source stated here last night that "Algeria does not possess the military capabilities to prevent a foreign intervention in Libya, however, it shares with the Arab countries their unified stand in rejecting these developments." The source revealed that Algerian diplomacy is currently engaged, with other Arab countries, in contacts particularly with the United States, Britain, and France "with the aim of averting a deterioration in the situation similar to the one that resulted from the Gulf war last year."

It explained that Algeria has sent representatives to the countries concerned with the Lockerbie plane issue to draw their attention to the difficult situation which will be created by this problem. The source revealed that there has been contacts to hold a Maghreb summit to discuss the developments in the Lockerbie issue and its consequences on the Maghreb region, adding that there were suggestions, which Algeria supports, to unify the Maghreb position.

The authorized source believes that the Maghreb meeting will be held shortly without specifying the venue or the date.

Boudiaf on FIS Dissolution, Domestic Changes

LD2403232592 Algiers APS in English 1032 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] London, 24/03/92 (APS)—Mohamed Boudiaf, president of the Higher State Committee (HCE), declared that "he was prisoner of no one" and that "everybody is prisoner of a serious economic crisis." In an interview released by the magazine AL-AWSAT, published in London, in its last issue, Mohamed Boudiaf referred to the situation in Algeria as well as measures taken by the power to deal with problems facing the country. The dissolution of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], Boudiaf declared, intervened following the decision taken by this party to take power by force, precisizing that authorities do not hamper in any way the democratic experience underway in Algeria. The appeal for the creation of the national gathering, Boudiaf added, aimed at "finding a global solution to problems of the country" and Algeria is on the eve of "deep changes".

Invited to give more details on the content and the human component of this national gathering, Boudiaf indicated that this latter "can be an adequate framework to pose and deal with all the problems lived by the country as well as an ideal link between the power and its social basis." "Thanks to this gathering, we can find both a solution to the question of democracy and

problems of the country," he pointed out. "The gathering which is a social basis, the largest possible, can be transformed into a political party if it wished it, if it has programme," Boudiaf pointed out. "Now if this gathering is qualified as national, that means that socialism has gone in Algeria and consequently the political orientation which previously marked the country," he said.

"On the other hand, only nationalism continues to exist as a frame of reflexion and actions to help the country go out of the crisis and the under-development," he declared. Regarding its human component, Boudiaf indicated that this gathering will gather youth first as well as all those who are concerned by the future of Algeria.

To a question on the relation between the HCE and the FLN [National Liberation Front], the HCE president indicated that the present power has no relation with parties, including the FLN.

Asked about the plan of economic relaunch proposed by Sid Ahmed Ghazali, at the request of the HCE, and if the political and the security conditions were gathered for its enforcement, Boudiaf answered that this plan is a "transitional plan which is to meet urgencies of a transitional step."

After having enumerated the five axes of the plan of economic relaunch, Boudiaf declared that the "financial crisis starts to be settled down since 4 March, date of the signing of several accords led by Le Credit Lyonnais, which paved the way for new public credits notably from Italy and France."

Asked about the expectation of the public opinion to see the promised radical changes be materialized and about the possible existence of a precise plan in this regard, Boudiaf answered that the elections of 26 December disclosed two major concerns: an aspiration for a deep change, a thirst for social justice.

Asked about the fact to have called for dialogue and to not give enough time to the FIS to positively answer, the HCE president, who recalled terms of his appeal to dialogue and the "stubborn" attitude of the FIS, pointed out that "the real dialogue can only but be with the people directly or with mature parties with precise programmes and a clear vision on the future. It is impossible to hold a dialogue with those who want to take power by force, anarchy and the occupation of the streets and mosques," he said. Answering a question on the Maghreb edification, Boudiaf answered that the Maghreb unity is "an ideal which has animated since the 20ies and which was born these three last years. Concrete results of this union remain below aspirations of peoples of the region because of the lack of confidence and the persistence of the Western Sahara problem. We remain convinced that the Arab Maghreb is the natural space of the development of Algeria." Asked to precise his thought on the Western Sahara question, following purposes attributed to him, Boudiaf answered it exists from the Algerian side "a will to find a rapid solution to

the Western Sahara problem," adding that there is a UN plan for the organization of a referendum as a frame of settlement" [no opening quotation mark as received] of the Western Sahara question.

Higher State Council on Domestic, Diplomatic Issues

LD2403200192 Algiers ENTV Television Network
in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Statement from the Higher State Council; place and date issued not given]

[Text] The Higher State Council, meeting today under the chairmanship of Mr. Mohamed Boudiaf, reminds people of the need for fighting all forms of waste and carrying out a policy of austerity in all domains.

The Council has continued to study the composition of the National Consultative Council which will be set up in April 1992.

Third [as heard], the Council urges the institutions and organizations charged with appointing representatives to the National Human Rights Monitoring Center to complete this process so that it becomes possible to elect the managing body and to set it up next April.

Fourth, the Council has decided to set up a group to discuss the main structure of the National Rally, which would be an appropriate framework for rational action by all the national dynamic forces, particularly youth, in order to take the country out of the crisis.

Fifth, the Council has asked the foreign minister to put forward a project to make the diplomatic apparatus compatible with the new national, regional, and international scene, and to set professional competence as the main criteria for appointments.

Information Council Stresses Press Freedom

LD2403235892 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 2300 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] The Higher Information Council passed a statement to APS today which said that the Council is following with the utmost interest and concern the events which have put the national press in a state of turmoil in the past few weeks. The statement added that the hope brought about by the birth of an independent pluralist press just two years ago is today the object of a difficult choice due to the multilateral excesses that have led to the current series of trials, which our democracy could very well do without. [sentence as heard]

The statement further said that as far as the Council's prerogatives and tasks are concerned, the law on information issued on 3 April 1990, particularly Article 59, calls on the Council to respect the rights of the citizens to information and freedom of expression in accordance with the Constitution of 23 February 1989.

The statement pointed out that the exercise of this constitutional right can only be guaranteed by a free press which respects a plurality of views. The Higher Information Council added that in the recent statements made by some politicians, it has noted a tendency to level criticism at the national press, thus putting in doubt the good faith of the national press and its competence.

In conclusion, the statement said that restricting freedom of the press is tantamount to indirectly undermining the citizens' freedom of expression, because freedom of the press is the guarantee of freedom of expression.

Italy Extends Loan to Young Entrepreneurs Program

LD2303112892 Algiers APS in Arabic 0930 GMT
23 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Algiers, 23 Mar (APS)—An executive cooperation agreement was signed yesterday afternoon at the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training in Ben Aknoun. The agreement stipulates that Italy will lend 18 billion Italian lire to finance a program for young entrepreneurs. The protocol was signed by Mr. Emir Ben Medjat of Algeria and by Mr. Antonio Badini, the Italian ambassador to Algiers, in the presence of Mr. Said Guechi, the minister of employment and vocational training and the Ministry's cadres. The low-interest loan will be repaid over 20 years. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Ministry Official on Libya, "New World Order"

NC2203083592 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2230 GMT
21 Mar 92

[Text] Alexandria, 21 Mar (MENA)—Dr. 'Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, said that Egypt is doing all it can to contain the crisis between Libya and the United States, Britain, and France, and prevent it from escalating. He added: We are working to uproot terrorism from our region and the entire world.

This came during a speech he gave at a seminar at the Syrian Club in Alexandria entitled "Egyptian Political and Economic Strategy," organized by the Egyptian Association of International Law with the cooperation of the consular corps in Alexandria. The seminar was attended by Dr. Mufid al-Dib, association chairman; Dr. Sa'ad al-Duqqaq, association secretary general; Umar al-Hadidi, Finland's consul and consular corps doyen in Alexandria; the consuls of various countries in the governorate; and a large number of association members.

Dr. al-Baz said that Egypt's stand is to avoid giving the impression of double standards in the criteria certain countries, and the international community as a whole, are using in dealing with problems resulting from similar causes. He added: We have very close ties with Libya.

especially after the elimination of the borders between the two countries and the coordination between them since then.

He then referred to the numerous positive signs that have become manifest in Libyan policy, and to the Libyan leadership's readiness to develop its policy regarding urgent regional and world problems, to the extent that it has become a factor in helping resist extremism, in reviving hope, and in preparing for positive coexistence between Arabs and non-Arabs.

Dr. al-Baz said: The stand taken by the Libyan leadership on the Gulf crisis is a clear example of the positive Libyan direction. He added: We have seen Libya marshalling more of its resources toward development and reconstruction. We want this work to continue. We also want this policy to continue and develop, and not reverse.

Dr. al-Baz stressed that Egypt is seeking to use the good relations it has with the United States, specifically the U.S. Administration, to move the situation toward protecting security and stability in the region, and sparing it the dangers that would definitely result from the use of violence and escalation.

The Egyptian official then spoke of the move toward a new world order. He said that this order is still in its labor pains, with some of its features appearing in some countries, but with its final image not yet formed. He added that the features of the order include the change in the old world order, which was based on bipolarity between the United States and the "former" Soviet Union; and that under the new order, the entire world is moving toward multipolarity, not unipolarity. He explained that this means that until the features of the new world order become clearer—and this could take two or three years—the United States will not be the sole superpower and autocrat. He said: We will see a number of blocs simultaneously acting and interacting. The first bloc will be a united Europe, in which Germany is occupying a leading role, because it is the locomotive pulling the other countries. France, Italy, and Britain are also included with Germany to a certain extent.

Dr. al-Baz added: The second power in the world is North America; that is, the United States and Canada. The third power is Japan and its tigers, whose number increases daily. These tigers are the countries in which Japan is supervising industrial and technological growth and providing capital, expertise, and information. The fourth power is Russia, which we expect to take a prominent position at the world level within the next five years. He added that this will come after Russia restores its balance, and utilizes its vast natural and human resources to develop and modernize its industrial and agricultural systems; raise the standard of services; absorb modern technology; and establish media relations with other countries, following the end of the cold war

and its transformation from a huge military power to a respectable economic power, which is the greatest challenge facing it.

Dr. al-Baz said that China is expected to become a major bloc within 15 to 25 years, and cannot be ignored or belittled. This is particularly since China has actually entered the stage of economic openness while maintaining its political and ideological system without any change.

Dr. al-Baz pointed out that the relative role of military force in defining the power of states and various international blocs will be diminished under the new world order. He said that although military force will always remain an element of power, its relative role will be reduced in favor of economic forces and cultural contributions. Also, the trend will increase among various countries to group together, and the number of individual countries outside regional or semi-regional blocs will decrease.

Dr. al-Baz expects world relations to turn from confrontation between the East and West to coexistence between the North and South, but marred somewhat by competition. He said there will be increasing pressure to focus on two aspects, democracy and human rights, not only on the international level, but also on the level of individual countries, without allowing certain countries to interfere in the domestic affairs of others.

Dr. al-Baz said that the Arab world will have to participate in this new world order and to achieve some kind of grouping, noting that this does not necessarily mean the rapid establishment of constitutional accords or mergers. What is meant here is rapprochement in interests and interaction among the Arab countries. He noted the possibility of achieving this goal in two phases. The first involves groupings of countries in the various parts of the Arab world: the Arab Maghreb; the Nile Valley region, which includes "Egypt, Sudan, and Libya"; the Near East area, which includes Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine; and the Gulf region. After such relations are established among these groupings, he said, the trend can increase toward a more comprehensive grouping, combining all Arab countries in a manner similar to the European example, which began with calculated and well-planned steps from the time the Rome Agreement was concluded.

During the seminar, Dr. al-Baz answered questions from members of the Egyptian Association of International Law and from a number of consuls in Alexandria who attended the seminar.

Sidqi Announces Pay Hike for Government Workers
*NC2203170792 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio
Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 22 Mar 92*

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi announced at the People's Assembly meeting, held today under the chairmanship of Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur, that the

government has decided to increase the salaries of government employees by 20 percent at the beginning of the new fiscal year on 1 July 1992. He added that the government is implementing the state's general policy of improving the living conditions of employees. He added that pensions will increase by the same percentage.

He added that the government also plans to incorporate cost of living and other social allowances into the basic salary over a period of five years. Twenty percent of the allowances will be merged into the basic salary this year.

On another issue, Dr. Sidqi said he hopes that part of the deposits of capital investment companies' clients will be repaid to them no later than 'Id al-Adha [June 1992]. He noted that it is important that current methods for remedying this crisis be continued. He noted that the Socialist Public Prosecutor and the Public Prosecutor have enough legal power to handle this affair.

He also announced that, in light of the agreement reached with the various Egyptian political parties, the government has approved a bill governing the relationship between the landlords and tenants of agricultural land.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1440 GMT on 22 March reports: "The People's Assembly reasserted its confidence in Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi's government today. It also approved the government's program, and the report submitted by the special committee formed by the assembly to draw up a response to the government's policy statement. People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur said he hopes the government will implement the recommendations included in the committee's report. He asked the concerned parliamentary committees to follow up these recommendations with cabinet members to solve citizens' problems. Dr. Surur pointed out that 23 People's Assembly deputies sent him a statement rejecting both the government's policy statement and the committee's response to it."]

Commercial Offices in Algeria, Libya To Reopen

LD2403104292 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 0700 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Informed sources in Cairo have stated that the Egyptian Ministry of Economy has agreed to reopen the Egyptian commercial offices in Algeria and Libya in mid-April. These offices—and commercial offices in other Arab countries—were frozen in 1979, following Egypt's signing of the Camp David Accord and the decision made by the Arab countries at the Baghdad Summit Conference to boycott Egypt.

The sources did not mention the type or volume of the deals that will be concluded between Egypt and Algeria. They pointed out, however, that the volume of trade between Egypt and Algeria is estimated at about \$100 million.

Libya

Arab League Holding Suspects Pending ICJ Ruling

JN2403173892 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1708 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Abd-al-Hamid al-Yahyawi dispatch from Brussels]

[Text] Clarifying the reports that Tripoli recently agreed to hand over the two Libyan suspects in the Lockerbie plane incident to the Arab League, Muhammad Sharaf al-Din al-Fayturi, Libyan ambassador in Brussels who is charged with representing his country before the International Court of Justice [ICJ] in The Hague, told our radio today that Libya agreed only to place the two Libyan defendants at the disposal of the Arab League in light of its positive role in peacefully settling crises.

The Libyan ambassador in Brussels denied reports that the Libyan suspects will be handed over. He said that they will remain at the disposal of the Arab League in Tripoli awaiting the issuance of a judgment by the ICJ on this issue.

With this statement to Radio Monte Carlo, the Libyan ambassador in Brussels has cut the road to reports being disseminated here that Tripoli's decision to hand over the two defendants to the Arab League is a cover-up and an indirect submission to U.S.-British demands.

Al-Bishari Discusses Sanctions, Terrorism

NC2403122192 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1052 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Tripoli, 24 Mar (MENA)—Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation, emphasized that the Libyan leadership and people fully appreciate President Husni Mubarak's role in the U.S.-British-French charges against two Libyans, regarding blowing up U.S. and French civilian aircraft.

He said that the Libyan people salute the distinguished role of Egypt and President Mubarak in finding an honorable and peaceful way out of the crisis that is compatible with international legitimacy and preserving Libya's dignity and independence.

In an interview with MENA, al-Bishari added that the stand of President Mubarak and the Egyptian people toward the Libyan people is not a strange attitude, because we are accustomed to Egypt taking the lead in tackling the causes of the Arab nation. He noted that Egypt has offered thousands of martyrs, and endured a great deal for the sake of the Arab nation's causes, foremost of which is the Palestinian issue.

He pointed out that all indications concerning the crisis are that the United States, Britain, and France regard the matter as political rather than legal. In a message to the UN secretary general, he said, Libya asked the secretary general to encourage the parties to the conflict to sit

together if the issue is political; but if it is a legal matter, the judiciary will decide the issue.

Commenting on the draft resolution against Libya put forth to the Security Council, al-Bishari said that if the resolution is issued, Libya will consider it unjust. He added that applying the UN Charter's Chapter 7 to Libya brings a great deal of injustice on Libya, because the crisis we are facing does not threaten world security and peace, and the Charter's Chapter 6 provisions apply, calling for resolving disputes peacefully through negotiations.

Al-Bishari categorically denied that Libya has received evidence of charges against the two Libyans. He noted: At first they said that investigations prompted charges against the two Libyans. We asked that this evidence be shown to an international investigative committee, to the United Nations, or to the Libyan judiciary, but they refused. In another instance they said that a spy had provided them with information. If they have convincing evidence, why do they not reveal it to the world?

He asserted that Libya is not afraid of holding a fair trial before the world. He said: We have resorted to the International Court of Justice, which will hold its first hearing on 26 March. We now declare that we will abide by the court's ruling whether it is for or against Libya. He called on the Security Council to wait until the court ruling has been passed.

Al-Bishari categorically denied reports that Libya sponsors or supports terrorism. He said: We have publicly condemned terrorism. We have asked those who say that Libya backs terrorism to define terrorism and identify those organizations that have links with the al-Jamahiriyah, so that we can cooperate in combating terrorism. But their only reply is intransigence.

The secretary of the General People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation said: In a message I sent to the UN secretary general, I requested that he ask about these camps, where the United States says we are sponsoring terrorism. I declared that Libya is open and any journalist can visit. I also asked the secretary general to appoint whomever he wants to investigate this issue, stressing that there are no camps in Libya, either for terrorists or any other purpose.

Al-Bishari stressed: Libya has no dispute with the United States or the West. We want to establish friendly relations with them on the basis of mutual respect. He warned of the consequences of persisting with the endeavors to insult Arabs, as this will cause very grave damage.

Ibrahim al-Bishari explained that should an economic blockade be imposed on Libya, the damages will not affect Libyan citizens alone but neighboring countries as well, since there are nationals from 103 countries in Libya. He stressed that an economic blockade is more damaging than military action.

In reply to a question, al-Bishari said: If the Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories decide on a peaceful solution, then we are with them and support them. All people choose the course that defines their fate. We respect people's right to self-determination.

Al-Bishari said that violence does not solve a problem because it might turn into a terrorist action targeting innocent people, as is happening now at the hands of the Irish Republican Army [IRA]. He added that it is the Irish people's right to determine their fate in accordance with the UN Charter. He noted that Libya severed its relations with the IRA after it became clear that its operations were targeting innocent civilians.

Ibrahim al-Bishari described Libyan-Russian relations as good. He said that there are interlinking interests between the two countries, and that Libya is eager to maintain this relationship. He added: Libya is establishing relations with the CIS countries in the interests of our two peoples.

Maghreb Foreign Ministers To Visit New York

*LD2403112592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 0700 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] The three Western capitals—Washington, London, and Paris—have decided to suspend their efforts at the UN Security Council to secure a resolution imposing an air and military embargo against Libya.

The decision to suspend these efforts followed Libya's expression of readiness to hand over its two citizens accused in the Lockerbie case to the Arab League, who will in turn hand them over to the UN secretary general, who will then hand them over to British or American justice for trial, according to diplomatic sources in New York.

Despite Libya's readiness for concessions, however, the UN representatives of the three Western countries have stipulated that Libya should officially declare its acceptance within three days from yesterday [23 March].

The same Western countries have announced that the decision to suspend efforts to secure an embargo resolution is a temporary measure and they insist that Libya's acceptance must not be attached to any conditions or guarantees.

In light of these developments, the foreign ministers of the Arab Maghreb Union countries will leave shortly for Tripoli and then New York to draw up the practical arrangements for implementation of Libya's decision to hand over its citizens.

Washington Seen Forcing Arab Region To 'Kneel'

*LD2203150392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Mar 92*

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Announcer] Correspondent Mohamed Lamine Mouaki looks at the background, actions, and reactions to the Lockerbie affair.

[Mouaki] It seems that the American-Western threats—in particular against Libya—have become a serious matter, and are moving toward the execution phase following the threatening phase, despite the fact that Libya has from the very outset expressed its acceptance of Western demands, interacted with these demands in a flexible manner, and provided many concessions.

In spite of that, the scenario has taken a different form. It is a scenario which is very close to what happened in Iraq, and we can mention some of the points:

First, there is an obvious concentration on the Arab region, as though the new world order which America is calling for requires forcing the Arab region down on its knees, and forcing certain regimes in particular to kneel down.

Second, even if we assume for the sake of argument the validity of what the Western circles are alleging; that is, Libya's responsibility for blowing up the Pan Am and the French airplanes, does this justify preparing a Western aggression on a sovereign country and a people?

Third, once more we find ourselves facing double standards, as though all the world's problems have finished, and only the Lockerbie affair remains to be taken to this extent and to be given this Western media and diplomatic mobilization. Were it like that, the issue would have been presented in a different way. In other words, all analogous issues should be treated similarly, and we know that the issue of blowing up planes exists and there are many matters which are still unsettled. Why has this affair been put forward individually when it is connected with an Arab country; that is, with Libya?

Fourth, what truly raises questions and causes confusion is the interpretation which is being applied to international law. Despite the absence of any article which requires the handing over of citizens of one country to another country, Western diplomacy, and the UN Security Council itself, have discarded this principle, or this obligatory legal international rule.

At any rate, it is clear that America has so far not responded to all the calls and mediation proposals put forward by some parties to find a solution to this issue, which justifies the intention to go to the maximum in public. In our estimation, even if Libya handed over the two suspects, these circles are prepared to create other justifications for the sake of executing their goals in the region.

We wish for a unified stand at the Arab foreign ministers' meeting, because the circumstances which prevented them from siding with Iraq, or taking their positions with respect to the Gulf War, are not the same circumstances which exist against Libya. There is not an occupied country involved. We hope a serious stand is taken.

[Announcer] Truly, Mouaki. Recent reports say that Libya will not abide by any resolution stemming from

the United Nations on the Lockerbie affair, according to the Libyan foreign minister.

Western Pressure Likened to 'New Crusade'

LD2403191192 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1615 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Tripoli, 24 March (JANA)—JANA's Islamic affairs editor has issued a call to the Muslim world, in which he said that at this moment, the Islamic religion and its adherents are being humiliated, that Islamic rites are obviously being derided, and that fasting Muslims are being endlessly provoked.

Increasing pressure by Western countries defies Muslims' sentiments during this holy month of worship. Talk of a committee to discuss the handover is the best example of such crusader pressure, because this committee would talk to fasting worshippers during the last 10 days of Ramadan, when people go into seclusion to worship God, and when even the accused could be worshipping at Mecca or in mosques. The Christian West, as represented by France, the United States, and Britain, is hoisting the crusader flag in unprecedentedly insolent defiance of Islam and Muslims. It is indeed strange that such a committee should come during the last 10 days of Ramadan to talk about the surrender of people and of their trial, while they are fasting and worshipping in seclusion at the mosques with their children and relatives.

In his call to Muslims around the globe, JANA's Islamic affairs editor reaffirmed to them that their rites have been derided and attacked; that the Islamic religion has been despised; that their brothers in Libya are Muslims; and that they are now going to the mosques to pray to God to grant them victory over the crusaders, to grant Muslims victory, and to absolve them of such humiliation. He urged them to go to the mosques, hold aloft copies of the Koran, and pray to God that he allow Islam to triumph over the new crusade.

Iranian Ambassador Seen Supporting Libya

NC2303141992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1312 GMT
23 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Tripoli, 23 Mar (MENA)—Mohammad Reza Nuri-Shahrudi, Iran's ambassador to Libya, told MENA that Iran opposes the current "crusade" against Libya.

Commenting on the anti-Libyan resolution being prepared at the UN Security Council, the Iranian ambassador said: Our basic attitude is one of constant support for Islamic causes. We stand in one trench with Libya's Islamic revolutionary government against this crusade. We also oppose the Zionists and the peace conferences, which harm Muslim interests and the hopes of the Muslim Palestinian people.

Asked what his government thinks about the expected imposition of sanctions against Libya—particularly an

air blockade—through a UN Security Council resolution, the ambassador noted that Iran and Libya have agreed to operate regular flights between them, an agreement which will be implemented once certain minor technical problems are overcome, regardless of any Security Council resolution. [passage omitted]

Libya-Iran Flights Planned

LD2303101192 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0910 GMT
23 Mar 92

[Excerpts] Tripoli, 23 Mar (JANA)—The brother secretary of people's congress affairs at the Secretariat of the General People's Congress met in Tripoli last night with the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Great Jamahiriya. [passage omitted]

The Iranian ambassador affirmed that from the beginning of this crisis, Iran has expressed solidarity with the Great Jamahiriya, that it rejects the Security Council's resolutions, and that it will not abide by them. Within this framework, the Iranian ambassador announced that air flights between the Great Jamahiriya and Iran will start on 1 April. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Libyan, Chinese, Iranian Presence in South Denied

NC2503161092 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1535 GMT
25 Mar 92

[Text] Khartoum, 25 Mar (MENA)—Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council in Sudan, has denied the presence of foreign forces from Libya, China, and Iran in southern Sudan.

In a meeting today with the media including editors in chief of Sudanese newspapers, he said that the media campaign against Sudan aims at pressuring the salvation government to stop its operations in the south.

He added that this campaign against Sudan gets its information from the Sudanese opposition abroad, which believes that the government's successes in southern Sudan kill all hopes for their return.

Army Spokesman Denies Southern Offensive

EA2403114492 Khartoum SUNA in English 1045 GMT
23 Mar 92

[Text] Khartoum, 23 Mar (SUNA)—The official spokesman of the armed forces, Maj-Gen Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Uwaydah, has denied that the armed forces has launched a comprehensive attack against the rebellion in south of Sudan, explaining that what currently going on just routine operations carried by the armed forces to lift the blockage from the areas and garrisons been blockaded by the rebellion's forces.

'Uwaydah, who has [been] interviewed by the BBC said that the military resolution will never end the dispute and the negotiations is the way for realising peace. The daily AL-INQADH AL-WATANI has attributed to 'Uwaydah his speech of what have been achieved of in Pochala town at the Upper Nile State on Sudanese-Ethiopian border is just an attack on the town to get it back and this doesn't need launching operations and attacks. [sentence as received] The Air Forces is the one which took back the town.

"The chances for a peaceful settlement of the dispute is open for both Nasir and Garang group and we are ready for negotiations at any time", explained 'Uwaydah. He also affirmed that the aim of the armed forces at this stage is to restore the land and to unify the front there. He pointed out that the RCC [Revolution Command Council] Chairman Gen 'Umar al-Bashir have declared many times that the door of peace is open, renewing his call to the rebellion's movement to sit around the negotiation table and not to outlaw the legislation and laws. At the end 'Uwaydah called on those supporting Garang to lift their hand off the Sudan and to let it solve its own problems.

Communique Terms Visit by Kenya's Moi 'Success'

EA2403210092 Khartoum SUNA in English 1555 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Khartoum, 24 Mar (SUNA)—The Ministry of Presidential Affairs today issued a communique on the visit of Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi to Sudan and on what the press reported about the visit. The communique said that what Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the RCC [Revolution Command Council] and the Council of Ministers, had said about the visit, was that it had been fruitful from all points of view and was regarded as a great success in terms of Sudanese diplomacy. He said the visit had reflected the genuine desire of President arap Moi and the Kenyan leadership to resolve any difficulties obstructing relations between the two countries.

The communique of the Ministry of Presidential Affairs said that, contrary to what was made out in the press reports, which had noted [words indistinct] when it reported that the meeting had involved confrontation or threats or the like from the Sudanese side. In fact it was a friendly meeting characterized by frankness and clarity [words indistinct]. The two presidents [words indistinct] their [words indistinct] necessity for joint grounds for understanding between the two countries based on (?sound) principles and joint interests and for these positive inclinations to be enshrined in agreements ordering the relationship and its development, thereby building bridges of confidence between the two countries, and that these agreements should include one on non-aggression.

Islamic Front Leader on Ties With Egypt, Iran*NC2003115092 Cairo MISR AL-FATAH in Arabic
16 Mar 92 p 3*

[First of two installments of interview with National Islamic Front leader Hasan al-Turabi by Muhammad 'Awdah and Mahmud Bakri in Khartoum; date not given]

[Excerpts] [MISR AL-FATAH] Dr. Hasan, you are accused of being the main obstacle to progress in Egyptian-Sudanese relations.

[Al-Turabi] I in turn want to ask what kind of relations I am supposed to be an obstacle to. Economic relations, for instance, or cultural? I am really amazed that it is being said that one of Sudan's symbols has become a threat to Egypt.

[MISR AL-FATAH] The accusation rests on the grounds that you are training and protecting so-called extremists and Islamists.

[Al-Turabi] First of all, Sudan neither possesses the military capabilities that could enable it to export Islam by conquest nor the financial capabilities that could enable it to support Islam's movement internationally. If Sudan had the financial capabilities to build cultural centers and mosques it would have done what the other Arab countries are doing.

[MISR AL-FATAH] We are not talking about Islam. We are talking about political Islam, because Islam is one thing and political Islam is another.

[Al-Turabi] We do not have a surplus in funds to finance even ritual Islam, let alone political Islam, and we do not have the power of an army to export political Islam by conquest. All that could be said against Sudan is that it has set an example and model of an Islamic state in a country that was thought of as backward and weak. Perhaps this might inspire those who are more powerful than Sudan to follow Sudan's lead, because with their political and economic power, it would be more worthwhile for them to follow Sudan's model. This is mostly true because establishing an Islamic state will encourage Islamists in other countries, through the power and influence of the model alone, to set up their own state. This is because many Muslims, no matter how eager they are about establishing an Islamic state, think that establishing an Islamic state in a world that only accepts a certain cultural model is a difficult thing and will result in serious consequences. But Sudan has set up an Islamic state and it seems that it has done so without facing a crisis that threatens its existence. This is what Sudan could be accused of. If this is the case, the accusation is correct.

[MISR AL-FATAH] But what is your response to the accusation that you are supporting terrorism and that you are seeking the help of Iranians to assist you in your mission?

[Al-Turabi] What is being said in this respect is nothing more than a series of absurdities. Does it make sense for the Sudanese Army, which has fought several battles, to seek the help of Iranian troops for training? As for reports about opening camps in Sudan to train terrorists, they are entirely fabricated and untrue. What is being published in this respect is contradictory, which proves it is implausible. What is actually happening is exercises for the popular defense forces. They are held for university students and government employees. These exercises do not last for more than two months and do not involve field weapons. Furthermore, these camps belong to the Armed Forces and only Sudanese are present.

[MISR AL-FATAH] If this is the case, how do you interpret the arrival of 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, mufti of the al-Jihad Organization in Egypt, in Sudan in the past?

[Al-Turabi] When he came to Sudan more than a year and a half ago, Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman was only passing through and stayed just two days. He traveled to the United States with an Egyptian passport aboard an Egyptian Airlines plane. Should we be held accountable for Dr. 'Umar's stay in Sudan for just two days, while Egypt hosts hundreds of southern, communist, and party opposition elements who own newspapers in Egypt, have pages in Egyptian papers, and hold conferences? Who is to blame?

I believe that we must reconcile ourselves. When a Sudanese opposition member leaves his country, I would prefer he not go to the West. It would be better if a neighboring Islamic country took him. It is also better for you if your opposition figures are hosted by a neighboring Islamic country. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman should have stayed in Sudan instead of the United States. Let Sudan and Egypt be frank on Egypt opening its door to any opposition member not wanting to reside in Sudan, and let Sudan open its door to any opposition member not wishing to stay in Egypt.

The unfair situation whereby Egypt is allowed to receive Sudanese opposition members while Sudan is not allowed to receive an opposition figure who left the country officially rather than fleeing, holds an Egyptian passport, and heads for the United States, and Sudan is blamed because it allowed him to transit aboard an Egyptian plane, is what stirs the Sudanese people. They say that there is a superiority complex and double standards in dealings between the two countries, that Egypt does not want Sudan to adopt a stand on the Gulf issue independent from its stand and that it does not want Sudan to do one-tenth of what it does. This is what always arouses feuds of pan-Arab conflict among brothers, neighbors, and Muslims.

[MISR AL-FATAH] Within this context, how do you assess ties with Egypt?

[Al-Turabi] There is no sense in giving stands on relations between Sudan and Egypt, because these relations have always been asserted. What we need is to try to explain the crises that hit these relations. The persistence

of these crises is an indication that relations will never end. I always thought that the best way to strengthen ties would be to leave the two peoples to deal with each other directly so that relations develop through innumerable transactions such as intermarriages and commercial relations. This would establish a firm basis for relations that would not be affected by leadership differences.

[MISR AL-FATAH] How do you interpret this continued tension in Egyptian-Sudanese relations?

[Al-Turabi] There is nothing new in Sudan that could explain the crisis we sense when we read Egyptian newspapers or listen to Egyptian statements. There is no movement opposing Egypt in Sudan, neither among the Sudanese nor the Egyptians. There is no one speaking against Egypt. Harming Egypt is something that never occurs to the Sudanese. Some authorities in Egypt show particular concern for the Nile waters. The Sudanese have no reservations on that issue and have not changed any of their policies concerning projects aimed at utilizing Nile resources. Therefore, we cannot understand the causes for the crisis. It is true that some aspects of Sudan's foreign policy, aspects that are unrelated to bilateral ties with Egypt, may or may not agree with Egyptian views, but there is no reason for this to cause resentment in Egyptian circles.

[MISR AL-FATAH] Let us ask you about Sudanese-Iranian relations, which were one reason for the tension in Sudanese-Egyptian relations.

[Al-Turabi] When Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani visited Sudan, there was a frantic reaction in Egypt. This happened despite the fact that the improvement in Sudan's relations with Iran came in the context of improved Iranian relations with several Arab countries. Moreover, Sudan knows that Egypt has close ties with Israel and the United States. Israel supports the rebellion in the south, which is aimed against the unity of Sudan. Still, we are not chastising Egypt for its ties with Israel. How can ties with Israel be good and those with a Muslim country such as Iran be bad? We cannot understand the anger that simmers in some Egyptian circles. We no longer understand the statements that Egyptians are making about these relations.

[MISR AL-FATAH] What, in your view, is the best way to overcome this continuing crisis in the relations?

[Al-Turabi] First of all, Egyptian politicians should stop attacking Sudan. We may understand it if a journalist writes something that could harm relations, for in this case another journalist may answer him, but for a politician to do it really hurts the Sudanese, because this is an official Egyptian position. The political statements issued in Egypt have done more harm to bilateral ties than anything that happened in the past. [passage omitted]

[MISR AL-FATAH] How did the issue of Hala'ib crop up suddenly?

[Al-Turabi] The issue of Hala'ib appeared in the Egyptian press and not in the Sudanese press. Not a single line was written about it in response to what was written in the Egyptian press. The only response was in the form of comments by Sudanese officials who visited Egypt recently, and their comments were published in Egypt. If there was a new development and Egypt wanted to raise the issue to settle it, it would have been better if Egypt had raised it through diplomatic channels with Sudan. Either the two parties would agree on the ownership of this land by Egypt or Sudan or they would resort to court or international arbitration.

[MISR AL-FATAH] Would it not have been more appropriate if you discussed this problem with Egypt before granting a Canadian company the right to prospect for oil in Hala'ib?

[Al-Turabi] This was not a first. Sudan used this right several times before. Egypt is prospecting there today. Sudan could have raised the same crisis and the same objection, but it has not. Sudan is a big country. The political incitement regarding a border issue arouses a spirit of national and regional conflict. This incitement was made by certain political parties.

[MISR AL-FATAH] It is being said that you are against relations with Egypt.

[Al-Turabi] I assure you—and I only represent myself—that I care for relations with Egypt and for strengthening them. I always express my love and appreciation for the Egyptian people. I consider that the relationship with Egypt has become a practical necessity, and I have always considered it a cultural and religious necessity. But I admit that political relations between Egypt and Sudan can be harmed. Statements and measures on the political level can undermine our relations. This gap must be guarded or closed. I have always called on the two peoples to overcome it. If the people are unified, nothing can harm them. Such exchanges will become like exchanges between people in Egypt—people of Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt—or in Sudan between people of the coast and people of the rural areas. This happens in any country, without harming social unity.

[MISR AL-FATAH] What is the extent of the relationship between the Islamic National Front, which you head, and the existing regime in Sudan?

[Al-Turabi] The Islamic National Front is just an aspect of Islam in Sudan, which has assumed different names and forms through its different roles and continued rejuvenation. Nothing was left of the circumstance under which the Islamic National Front was established. The Front was established in a specific historical circumstance to serve the goals of the Islamic political action, and the Front will not show up in Sudan's historical future.

[MISR AL-FATAH] But this does not contradict the evidence that clearly indicates that you are actually steering the national salvation revolution in Sudan.

[Al-Turabi] This cannot be right. I am not even the guide of the Islamic movement in Sudan. The Islamic movement was not established by any known shaykh. The movement is composed of various intellectuals who are more or less of the same age and of the same culture. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

President, Libyan Official View Lockerbie Issue

[Quotation marks as received]

LD2403135392 Tripoli JANA in English 1440 GMT
23 Mar 92

[Text] Tunis, al-Rabi' [March] 23, (JANA-Arab Maghreb Union pool)—President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of the sisterly Republic of Tunisia received this morning Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi. During the reception, Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi delivered a message from the leader of the revolution to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. A friendly talk was conducted, in depth, for an hour, which covered a number of important issues on the bilateral arena, the Arab Maghreb Union and the exchange of views and co-ordination of efforts in its respect.

Following the reception, Major al-Humaydi addressed a statement to the Tunisian media saying I was very happy to meet President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the hero of the glorious day of November 7th [1987—overthrow of President Bourguiba]. I delivered an important message to him from his brother the leader of the revolution, Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi. During this reception, he had a chance of conducting talks, in depth, in order to curb the antagonistic Western tone towards the Great Jamahiriya and the possibilities of a tripartite aggression against the Jamahiriya through the adoption of illegal resolutions by the Security Council under fanciful pretexts and unsubstantiated accusations, under the name of international legitimacy which was exploited for use against the Arab nation alone.

Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi confirmed that this belligerence is not caused by those fabricated accusations

but it is the adopted strategy aiming at forcing neo-colonialism and striking at the capabilities of the Arab nation and ridding it of all its' potential in favor of the nation's enemy.

Major al-Humaydi stated that Libya proposed a number of solutions towards those accusations and declared its' abidance by Resolution 731 because it does not call for surrender but for co-operation. She also co-operated with the relevant countries by means of a number of proposals in this area. He re-affirmed that the Great Jamahiriya did not find a sympathetic ear among the other parties, however she had taken the case to the International Court of Justice for judgement. Thus, she will abide by the court's judgement. Major al-Humaydi noted that there is an obvious denigration of the some international institutions by certain concerned countries and now they are accelerating the adoption of an unfair resolution by the Security Council before seeing the judgement of the court which we believe will be in favour of the Great Jamahiriya since it will be compatible with the reasoning of international law.

Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi said that we see with Arab eyes and with a nationalist evaluation, what is going to be adopted in this resolution and non-compliance with it in case of its adoption because it is not constitutional and contravenes the Montreal treaty signed by everyone because it is a blow to the nation and destruction and intentional killing for the Arab Maghreb Union which is facing a difficult test.

Major al-Humaydi added 'I conveyed to the President Ben Ali the thanks and appreciation of the leader of the revolution and the Arab Libyan people to the sisterly Tunisian people for their pioneering role in support of the Arab Libyan people which expresses the brotherly and fraternal links and the bonding apparent by the official Tunisian positions and the efforts exerted together with all the concerned parties as well as the actions which seek a peaceful settlement to problems far from force and the use of threats and sanctions.

Major al-Humaydi concluded his statement to the Tunisian media saying 'We salute again and present the compliments on behalf of the leader of the revolution and the Arab Libyan people on the occasion of the anniversary of independence and we extend our wishes to the Tunisian people as well as wishes for progress and prosperity under the instigator of the day of November 7th, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Saudi Arabia

Council Reduces Charges for State Goods, Services

LD2403111892 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0640 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Excerpts] Holy Mecca, 23 Mar (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, chaired the meeting of the Council of Ministers held at 2300 on Monday, 20 Ramadan [23 March] at the al-Safa Palace in holy Mecca. In his statement to SPA following the meeting Information Minister 'Ali al-Sha'ir said that the king opened the meeting by expressing thanks and gratitude to God for His blessings. [passage omitted]

The information minister stated that the Council then listened to a short report presented by Muhammad Ibrahim Mas'ud, minister of state and member of the Council of Ministers, on the outcome of the emergency meeting of the Arab League Council where his excellency led the Kingdom's delegation to its meeting. In light of this the beloved king spoke about some issues concerning the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy. He emphasized, God protect him, that the Government of the Kingdom is keen to maintain good and strong contacts and relations with all fraternal and friendly states that have supported right and have done a lot to attain justice and peace in the region. He pointed out that this is always done, as is known about the Kingdom's policy, within a framework of mutual respect and ensuring mutual interests.

The information minister went on to say: At the Islamic level the Council reviewed the sufferings of our Burmese Muslim brethren who have taken refuge in Bangladesh as a result of the oppression that they were exposed to. In this light the custodian of the two holy mosques gave his noble instructions to the competent authorities to send urgent material aid to those refugees as a contribution from the Kingdom to ease their sufferings and pain, particularly in this virtuous month.

Following this King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, may God support him,

reviewed with the Council a number of questions pertaining to the citizens' interest and easing the burden of the cost of living, including the prices of gasoline, port services, telephone charges, commercial registration duties, passport and visa fees, water charges, gas prices, and electricity charges.

After examining the aforementioned topics and exchanging views during the debate, and in light of the directives of the custodian of the two holy mosques and his continuous concern for the happiness of his citizens, the Council issued a decision stipulating the following: First: To reduce the retail price of gasoline per liter by 20.4 halalah [100 halalah = 1 riyal], or by 37 percent of the current price.

Second: To bring the duties and charges for port facilities to their former level before the new ports statute was issued by royal decree No. M/42 on 2.7.1405 AH [after hegira] and its amendments.

Third: To abolish charges for local telephone calls, making them free instead of five halalah per minute, and to reduce installation fees and annual user charges by 53 percent.

Fourth: To reduce all categories of commercial registration fees. The reduction ranges between 60 percent and 87 percent of the current fees.

Fifth: To abolish the charge for final exit visas, which was 100 riyals, and to reduce the fee for issuing passports by 33 percent.

Sixth: To reduce the water consumption charge by 50 percent from the first category at current prices. This category represents more than 92 percent of overall water consumption.

Seventh: To reduce the retail price of gas by 30 percent of the current price.

Eighth: To reduce charges for electricity consumption as follows:

1. Reduce the first category by two halalah, i.e. by 28.5 percent of the current charge, and to raise its average to 4,000 kilowatts per hour.
2. Reduce the second category by two halalah, i.e. 20 percent of the current charge, and to raise its average to 6000 kilowatts per hour.
3. Raise the minimum level of the third category from 4001 to 6001 kilowatts per hour. [passage omitted]

Saddam Reportedly Admits Desert Storm 'Mistakes'*NC2403164592 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] The defeated tyrant has recently been eager to hold regular party meetings. Very recently he called senior party cadres in al-Basrah to attend a meeting and dialogue on the Gulf war to answer many questions raised in popular and military circles, to restore confidence among senior civilian and military party cadres and himself, and to cover his recklessness and fatal mistakes which destroyed the country. Knowledgeable observers explain the unusual frankness and daring questions which some cadres asked about the reasons for the defeat. The observers note that the regime gave these questions to these cadres beforehand as part of a well-rehearsed farce that it had planned.

For the first time Saddam told the audience frankly: Now we must admit that we were sometimes wrong in our handling of the crisis and the war. Our first mistake after entering Kuwait was to waste time and effort settling the domestic issues in Kuwait, which he reverted to calling the 19th governorate. He said that his mistake was not continuing the attack all the way to Saudi Arabia's eastern province and then occupying it. Saddam added: We should have occupied the eastern province and mined its oil wells. Had we kept that area under our control we would have achieved a lot and become the world's largest oil exporter. Saddam noted that even if international pressure had been exerted and military threats made, he could have waited for the alliance troops to arrive in the eastern province and then make a bargain linking his withdrawal from it to his remaining in Kuwait.

The defeated tyrant Saddam Husayn said that his second mistake was to release Western hostages. He noted that Austrian President Kurt Waldheim convinced him their release would help calm Europe, facilitate several developments, and ease the international mobilization against the regime. Saddam stated that the hostage card was an extremely important one but that he lost it. He noted that by releasing the hostages he hoped to shake the international alliance and gain enough time to put things in order.

The tyrant added that his third mistake was not attacking the U.S. troops when they arrived in the region before reinforcements were sent. Had he attacked then he could have scored military achievements, as he termed them, and inflicted heavy casualties. Saddam said that had he done so from the start voices would have been raised calling for the alliance troops to withdraw from the new Vietnam and leave him in Kuwait.

Asked why he had not, Saddam replied: You sometimes experience a moment when you hesitate in making a decision due to the information available at the time.

In admitting his fourth mistake the tyrant Saddam criticized former Soviet President Gorbachev and

French President Mitterrand. He described Gorbachev's role as the worst, adding that he and Mitterrand helped influence the defeated regime's indecisive stand.

Saddam blamed Iran for his fifth mistake, accusing it of what he called the greatest act of treachery. He noted that following his concession on Iraq's sovereignty and territories and his approval of Iran's demands, the Iranians made promises and pledges which he believed were sincere. They were, he said, ill intentioned. Saddam pointed out that Iran offered food supplies to the inhabitants of southern Iraq, which his regime accepted, but that the boxes it sent had food on top and weapons and ammunition underneath. The tyrant added that Iran caused trouble in al-Basrah, thus giving him one of two choices: Kuwait or al-Basrah. Naturally he had to choose al-Basrah, he said.

Continuing his revelations, Saddam noted that alliance aircraft bombed the front's command, killing its commander and his aides and cutting communications with the front lines.

At the end of the meeting and in trying to boost his party cadres' morale, Saddam closed his confessions by stating that he had decided to set up a special commission to write about the war's complicated issues. [Deputy Prime Minister] Tariq Hanna 'Aziz will head the commission, the findings of which will be converted into a history book used to teach Iraq's young generations.

U.S. Imposes 'Pressure' on Oil Export Issue*JN2403135692 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] On the occasion of the start of talks in Vienna next Thursday on exports of Iraqi oil, INA's political editor has noted that Security Council Resolution 687 stipulates that Iraq can export quantities of oil to meet the Iraqi people's needs for food and medicine with the approval of the Security Council.

The U.S. Administration and its allies obstructed Iraq's exercising of this right and forced the Security Council to issue the two unjust resolutions, 707 [as heard] and 712. America alleged that these two resolutions make it possible to provide the Iraqi people with food and medicines. The fact is, however, that these two resolutions were issued to cover the expenses of the UN missions and their activities to implement the unjust resolutions from the Iraqi people's money and to use 30 percent of the oil revenues for reparations. The U.S. Administration also imposed through the two resolutions conditions to apply political pressure on Iraq, threaten its sovereignty, and undermine its internal situation. It also introduced in the two resolutions very complicated administrative measures that would make it impossible to provide the Iraqi people with food and medicines in accordance with these two resolutions. Therefore, Iraq objected to these two tendentious and unjust resolutions.

INA's political editor added: The UN General Secretariat organs then demonstrated readiness to understand Iraq's objections to and reservations about the two resolutions and proposed to embark on talks to reach an understanding on them in order to really enable Iraq to make food and medicines available within the framework of a process which would not encroach on Iraq's sovereignty and which would be simple and realistic.

Among the basic motives that prompted the General Secretariat in this direction were its dire need for money to cover the high expenses of its missions and its failure to finance these expenses from other countries. The General Secretariat is waiting for Iraq to export oil in order to pay the costs of these missions. Iraq responded to this desire and agreed to enter into talks with the General Secretariat. The first round was held in Vienna at the start of February, and the talks were positive.

The INA political editor said: When the UN delegation returned to New York to brief the Security Council on the results of the talks, however, the Americans and the British applied pressure in order to make the UN delegation go back on the flexibility it showed at the Vienna talks and instead insisted on the tendentious and unjust conditions stipulated in Resolutions 707 [as heard] and 712. Thus, the process was aborted and the talks stopped.

During its visit to New York the Iraqi delegation led by the deputy prime minister clearly presented Iraq's opinion of these two resolutions to all the Security Council members. Iraq's opinion is that Iraq agrees to sell quantities of oil to purchase food and medicines and that it does not object to informing the United Nations about buying and selling transactions. Iraq, however, categorically refuses to allow this process to be used to impose tutelage over the people of Iraq and to interfere in their internal affairs.

On this basis Iraq agreed to go once again to Vienna on Thursday to resume the talks.

INA's political editor says: World public opinion as well as the majority of the Security Council states understand Iraq's stand. However, we should expect maneuvers and plots by America and Britain to turn this process into a process to put political pressure on Iraq to achieve mean colonialist objectives. Therefore, we should be vigilant and should continue to struggle to protect Iraq's rights, sovereignty, and basic interests against any plotting or maneuvering.

IAEA Demands Nuclear Site's Partial Destruction
AU2503103492 Paris AFP in English 0956 GMT
25 Mar 92

[Text] Vienna, March 25 (AFP)—The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Wednesday it would demand that Iraq destroy part of its controversial al-'Atiyah nuclear facility near Baghdad despite Iraq's insistence that the site is engaged in peaceful research.

"We have drafted a plan of action for the destruction of key buildings which we will hand over to the Iraqis," said Maurizio Zifferero, who led the IAEA in talks with Iraqi experts which ended here late Tuesday.

Zifferero was speaking after five days of talks with the Iraqis about their country's nuclear technology amid strong suspicions that Iraq has managed to salvage part of its nuclear military potential.

Earlier the Iraqi delegation led by Khalid Sa'id told a press conference that al-'Atiyah was "built and equipped for civilian industrial purposes and is not a nuclear centre." He said there was nothing to justify a call for the site to be demolished and "any such decision would be politically motivated."

The al-'Atiyah site, about 40 kilometers (25 miles) southwest of Baghdad, was mentioned in documents seized by IAEA experts as a planned site for nuclear arms production. About 85 percent of the facility survived the Gulf War intact and has since been inspected on four occasions by nuclear experts. On Tuesday, Zifferero said the main difficulty was identifying the installations to be destroyed. He said the 11th IAEA experts mission was due to arrive on April 5 in Iraq.

UN Inspectors View Destroyed Ballistic Missiles
NC2403183792 Paris AFP in English 1807 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Baghdad, March 24 (AFP)—UN weapons experts have inspected the debris of more than two dozen ballistic missiles Iraq said it had destroyed, team leader Derek Boothby disclosed on Tuesday. He also told reporters that he expected the Iraqi authorities to reveal more information about the ballistic weapons arsenal before the team could carry out further inspection rounds.

Boothby, who arrived here Saturday at the head of a 35-member team of experts, was speaking here after a "no notice" inspection of an establishment in the Tikrit area, 170 kilometers (105 miles) north of Baghdad.

He said no missiles were found then, but that the experts had viewed the debris of more than two dozen ballistic missiles during earlier inspections of two sites. He did not identify them. "I asked the Iraqi authorities to excavate all the missiles and missile components and they are in the process of doing that," he said. [passage omitted]

UN Official on Chemical Missiles
NC2403201692 Paris AFP in English 1918 GMT
24 Mar 92

[Text] Manama, March 24—UN weapons experts have put out of action 463 chemically-tipped rockets in Iraq over the past month but "thousands more" probably wait to be destroyed, team leader Michel Desgranges said Tuesday. The Frenchman said his 26-member team

destroyed the rockets during a month-long mission to Iraq's al-Khamisiyah site—400 kilometers (248 miles)—which started February 21. "There are probably thousands more rockets fitted with chemical warheads that should be destroyed," Desgranges said on his arrival here with the team at the end of their mission. "But there is nothing more that needs destroying in al-Khamisiyah," he added.

Desgranges is to report to the United Nations in three days on the results of his work in Iraq. He said that 463 chemically-tipped warheads were destroyed, adding that the chemicals neutralised stood at "more than three tonnes."

Diplomatic sources here said that another chemical weapons team was expected to visit Iraq in the next few weeks.

Column Criticizes Motives of Opposition

JN1903214192 Baghdad AL-IRAQ in Arabic
18 Mar 92 p 8

["Ideas in Lines" column by 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rawi: "Here Is the Voice of the Opposition"]

[Text] Some people have started abusing the meanings of some Arabic words by giving them meanings other than those that they bear. The word (opposition) has been one of the words that has been much abused.

Differences of opinion are as old as creation. These differences have enabled man to reach the best ways, formulas, and styles to make life go on and develop. This has taken place through comparison and discussion of the controversial topics and agreeing on the best of them at a specific time and place. Therefore, the well-known principle says that (a difference in opinion is a healthy condition).

In our youth we learned something called constructive criticism. We also learned that there is something else called destructive criticism: he who wants to collect mistakes and to criticize, not to correct but to harm and sabotage. Those who are older than us have warned us against this subversion, which wears the clothes of criticism.

We grew up and started to distinguish between what is correct and what is wrong, between what is constructive and what is destructive, in accordance with the service or the harm that this criticism provides to the homeland. Our standards are now based on what is nationalist and what is hostile to the homeland. Through this, we learned that there is a nationalist (opposition) and that there is something else clothed as the (opposition) which tried to exploit this word to use it in other ways harming its true meaning.

The (opposition), according to the present definition, means to stand against Iraq in wartime and when it faces aggression, and to implement the subversive plots in

peacetime in a bid to weaken it. The opposition is to have a (master) which is one of the foreign countries or their allies. The opposition is to revile the country of your parents and grandfathers and the land where your children live. The opposition is to belie every decision that the Iraqi leadership makes. The opposition is to raise the slogan of (deposing the authority). In all cases, if you do not raise this slogan then you are an (agent of the regime) and you will not be allowed to stay in the Syrian arena and to use Iranian territory to enter the northern region. You will not take a forged passport from this or that regime and allowances in dollars from (this or that leader). The opposition is to close your eyes and to be like a parrot which repeats what Iraq's enemies want to propagate. The opposition is to be a spy against your country and who provides reports to those who kill Iraq's children, elderly persons, and women. The opposition is to glorify those whom you described yesterday as traitors, suspects, and reactionaries and to follow (Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim) blindly, to kiss the hands of (Fahd), applaud (Hafiz), participate in a delegation which visits the United States and Britain, and to sign a petition, the first name on which belongs to (Sa'd Salih Jabir).

We say to the world: We in Iraq learned that the (opposition voice) comes from the homeland and not from outside. It uses newspapers published in Iraq and not those published by the printing presses of the intelligence organs, the voice which is heard on Republic of Iraq Radio and not the Voice of America, or London, or the black radios. The opposition voice is heard loud in front of the highest official, who listens to it and adopts it if it is beneficial to the homeland and if it serves the people's sons. He who wants evidence of this should read leader Saddam Husayn's speech to the heads and members of the Legislative and Executive Councils of the Autonomous Region on the anniversary of issuing the immortal 11 March Statement, which approved and organized the national rights of our Kurdish people.

We repeat what leader Saddam Husayn said in the hope that those who turned a deaf ear to this call would hear: "It is not important to love Saddam Husayn or not. What is important is to love the homeland, to love what should be loved so that the homeland becomes strong and the people become comfortable."

Does that which is called the (opposition) love the homeland? They have to reevaluate themselves before their grandsons stone them with the rocks from the houses and schools which their ally Bush demolished on top of them.

Private Bank To Open, Aid Development Plans

JN1903202192 Baghdad INA in English 2000 GMT
19 Mar 92

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 19, INA—A new private bank called the Baghdad Bank will shortly start its credit and banking activities in Iraq alongside the two state banks of al-Rafidayn and al-Rashid.

The setting up of the bank comes within the frame of the state resolve to permit the private sector to undertake this type of dealing and for encouraging financial investment operations for serving the development plans.

***Saddam Refuses To Permit PLO Broadcast**

92P40144A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
18 Mar 92 p 3

[Text] Nicosia, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has refused to give permission for broadcasts of the Voice of Palestine-Voice of the PLO program, which used to be aired from Baghdad on Iraqi radio. It is known that Iraqi radio had allocated one of its shortwave frequencies for one to three hours since the beginning of the eighties—depending on the prevailing political climate—to the PLO office in Baghdad, which later became the Palestinian embassy.

Sources in the Iraqi capital say that the Palestinian embassy has attempted more than once to resume broadcasts of this program, especially after repairs were made to Iraq's radio stations, but the Iraqi authorities always answered that technical reasons did not permit the resumption of the broadcast and that more time was needed to restore things to how they were before. These sources indicated that Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat himself approached Saddam Husayn about the Voice of Palestine-Voice of the PLO but Saddam Husayn gave an extremely ambiguous response, promising "God willing, we will study the subject."

The PLO currently considers itself in urgent need of this station or a similar one because it wants to maintain direct contact with the residents of the occupied territories and to compete with the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] movement and other opposition forces.

Perhaps the PLO also urgently needs such a radio program because the forces opposing it in Damascus address the occupied territories chiefly through a powerful medium-wave radio station called "al-Quds [Palestinian Arab] Radio," which is broadcast from somewhere in Syrian territory and is operated by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, led by Ahmad Jibril.

Sources knowledgeable about internal affairs in Baghdad say that the interruption of the Palestinian program Voice of Palestine-Voice of the PLO is not due to any type of technical problem because all of Iraq's broadcasting stations are repaired and resumed broadcasting long ago. The reason is purely political. On the one hand it appears that the Iraqi authorities are concerned about any manifestation of support for the PLO, especially at this stage. On the other hand it appears that Saddam Husayn does not want to anger groups opposed to the PLO, especially the Hamas movement and others. Furthermore, Saddam does not want to give the appearance of supporting peaceful solutions, which he has branded as surrender, by permitting the PLO to resume broadcasting its program on Iraqi radio—a program which is dedicated to defending the official Palestinian policy and to participation in the peace process.

It has been said that Palestinians have affirmed to the Iraqi authorities that they would accept a one-hour broadcast if technical reasons do not permit a three-hour one, but the response was as before: "Nothing new really; the technical reasons still exist and when they are resolved we will inform you ourselves."

It is also worth pointing out that the cessation of the Palestinian broadcast from Baghdad has forced the PLO to rely on two programs which are not audible. One of them is one hour long, is broadcast from Algeria, and cannot be heard except in a few parts of western Europe. The other is broadcast from Sanaa and is seldom heard outside of Yemen.

'Amazement' at U.S. Silence on Patriot ReportTA2503065292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0600 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Senior defense establishment sources in Israel have expressed amazement at the U.S. State Department's announcement that it has no intention of publishing the report submitted by the U.S. teams currently investigating the transfer of Patriot missiles or parts from Israel to other countries without permission.

The sources pointed out that the allegations published by the U.S. media have severely damaged Israel's standing in public opinion and tarnished its image in Congress. Now, when it is becoming clear that the investigation will prove those suspicions false, it is only right that the administration make the facts public, in order to repair the damage as much as possible, the sources asserted.

Our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the members of the U.S. team will continue work today. They are scheduled to return to the United States tomorrow.

'Insolence' Not To Publish ResultsTA2503110092 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
25 Mar 92 p 3

[Report by Alex Fishman, Aharon Klein, and ITIM]

[Excerpts] It is feared that stored missiles are being damaged during the Americans' inspection of the missile batteries. That was stated by senior Air Force elements yesterday. Most of the missiles checked by the Americans are stored in sealed containers, and the U.S. review teams open them up, examine the serial numbers, remove parts from the casing, and check the missiles' electronic systems. [passage omitted]

"The level of suspicion toward us has decreased, and the tension has largely dissipated," senior officials said yesterday. According to those officials, the U.S. team was much more relaxed yesterday. Nevertheless, the Americans again last night left guards at the sites where their checks had not been concluded, out of fear that the Israelis would introduce "modifications" to the missiles.

A misunderstanding caused long moments of tension between the Americans and antiaircraft operators the day before yesterday. The Americans wanted to examine a battery's electronic system, and the Israelis had difficulty locating it. After about two hours the system was found and everyone was relieved.

"It would be insolence not to publish the results of the report compiled by the U.S. investigators." That was how senior security officials reacted yesterday to remarks by State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler, who said that the results would remain classified. According to the officials, "we have nothing to hide; we would very much like to see the report released, proving that the U.S. allegations were baseless."

The ITIM news agency adds:

Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav said yesterday that "hostile intentions and commercial elements in the United States came together in an attempt to harm Israel and affect election results here."

According to Qatzav, a vicious intention lurks behind the release of accusations that Israel has transferred Patriot missile expertise to the PRC.

Levi To Visit Japan in Two WeeksTA2403201392 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Hebrew 1900 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] In two weeks, Foreign Minister David Levi will launch an official visit to Japan at the invitation of the Japanese Government. During his seven-day visit, Foreign Minister Levi will meet with the Japanese prime minister and various cabinet ministers. Our political correspondent notes that Japan has recently made an effort to improve its ties with Israel, mainly because of its desire to be more involved in the peace process in our region.

Minister Levi's visit to Japan will mainly be devoted to talks and agreements in the sphere of economics.

Rabin Rejects U.S. 'Dictate' on ConstructionTA2403121392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1005 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Excerpts] Labor Chairman Yitzhaq Rabin has said that although Israeli-U.S. relations are at a low point and despite the vicious accusations against us, the damage is not irreversible and can be overcome. Rabin toured Yotne'am today, and our correspondent Haviva Roger was also there.

[Begin recording] [Roger] [passage omitted] In Rabin's opinion, the current crisis in Israel's relations with the United States can be overcome. During the reassessment period of 1975, he said, the situation was such that not just economic aid but arms sales were held up. Even after the crisis that resulted from our saying no to the Americans, we proved that a relationship based on confidence can be restored. This time, too, relations can be improved without giving in to U.S. dictates, Rabin stated.

[Rabin] I, too, think that we should not give in to any U.S. dictate not to build in areas beyond the Green Line. I, and Labor, insist on our position that there is no going back to the 1967 borders, even if peace is attained.

Indeed, our relations with the United States today, particularly between the top echelons of both governments, are at a low point, but I would definitely not describe the damage as irreversible.

[Roger] The basis of these relations remains firm, Rabin said, and it will enable us to overcome this crisis. [end recording]

Drop of Convertible U.S. Military Aid Feared

TA2503113792 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR
in Hebrew 25 Mar 92 p 1

[Report by Avi Bnayahu]

[Text] Fear has been expressed in the Israeli defense establishment that U.S. reports on Israel's military exports could directly reduce the amount of convertible money allocated from the U.S. military aid budget for 1993.

According to senior defense establishment figures, the amount of convertible funds for 1993 is supposed to be decided by the U.S. Congress soon, after Israeli representatives failed to reach an agreement with U.S. Administration officials on the issue.

Those funds are that part of the annual military aid budget that the U.S. Administration allows Israel to convert from dollars to shekels, thus enabling the Israeli defense establishment to place work orders with the local military industry, in order to maintain its production infrastructure and provide employment. The amount of convertible funds this year is \$475 million, out of the \$1.8 billion given in military aid.

It is being said in Israel that the grave condition of the U.S. defense industries may reduce the convertible portion of the military aid budget, because those industries apply heavy pressure on the Congress, Senate, and the administration.

It is believed that U.S. defense plants, some of which are on the brink of being closed, were involved in the tendentious leaks published in the U.S. media on Israel's military exports, for the purpose of damaging Israeli industries.

In the coming days, the Israeli Government and defense establishment will try to convince the U.S. Congress to maintain the level of convertible money in 1993 in order to prevent extensive dismissals in the Israeli defense industry.

Chinese Delegation Denies Technology Transfer

TA2503114092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1100 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The official Chinese delegation currently visiting here has denied that Israel sold missile technology to the PRC.

Our correspondent Shula Schmerling reports that the delegation, from the Chinese Communist Party's International Liaison Department, arrived in Israel at the invitation of MAPAM [United Workers Party] and the Israeli Communist Party. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 25 March reports that the Chinese delegation will also meet "with members of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks and with representatives of the Palestinian left."]

The head of the delegation, who is the department's deputy director, said that the visit was designed to improve ties between the two countries in all fields. He

expressed the hope for future cooperation between Israel and the PRC in the field of technology. The Chinese official also stressed that the PRC, which is a permanent member of the Security Council, wants to contribute to the Middle East peace process.

Senior EC Team To Discuss Role in Arms Talks

TA2403202892 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Hebrew 1900 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Heads of the EC have been pressuring Israel to consent to the inclusion of EC representatives in the Middle East arms control discussions. These talks are an important part of the Middle East multilateral peace negotiations which were launched in Moscow and are scheduled to continue in May.

Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that Israel opposes the inclusion of European representatives in the sensitive arms control debates, insisting that only Arabs and the representatives of the United States and Russia may participate. Israel's objection stems mainly from the fear that Europe will side with the Arabs.

Our correspondent has learned that a senior EC delegation is due to arrive in Israel at the end of the week to discuss this issue, among others.

EC Role 'Not Categorically Rejected'

TA2503063592 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0500 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] Political sources in the Foreign Ministry have not categorically rejected Europe's demand to join the committee on arms control and disarmament in the Middle East. Our political correspondent Arye Golan reports that an EC delegation will visit Jordan, Egypt, and Israel toward the end of the month. Discussions are being held preparatory to the visit to decide whether Israel should agree to let the EC participate in the arms control talks. Our correspondent notes that Israel has so far refused any European participation in those discussions.

Large Group of Arabs Inducted Into Military

TA2503100592 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0800 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] At the Tiberias recruiting center this morning, a large number of Muslim, Christian, and Bedouin Arabs will be inducted into regular service in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. This is one of the largest groups of Arabs ever inducted into the military.

Our correspondent Shulamit Schmerling reports that the group includes dozens of young men from Galilee villages, as well as men from the Bedouin tribes in the Galilee who traditionally volunteer for military service. They will serve as trackers or border policemen and will also join regular IDF units. One of the youths told our correspondent that he and other young men from his village had volunteered for service. He said he hoped to serve in the Giv'ati Brigade.

Foreign Minister on Arab League, Beirut Meetings*JN2403203492 Amman Jordan Television Network
in English 2000 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] In Cairo yesterday, the Arab foreign ministers' council urged the Security Council not to impose sanctions on Libya. The foreign minister, Kamil Abu-Jabir, spoke to Maha al-Sha'ir about the council's meeting.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Jabir] Well, the resolution was an attempt by the Arab League to find a middle ground between the two positions; one taken by Libya, and the other one taken by the three governments concerned—the United States, France, and Britain. And we had hoped, and we asked that the three governments will wait until the International Court of Justice renders its opinion regarding the matter, and to see whether we can come up with a solution that is a middle ground between the two positions.

[Al-Sha'ir] According to reports in papers today, it said that Libya decided to give in the two suspected Libyans to the Arab League, and the Arab League would deal with them. How would that reflect on the resolution?

[Abu-Jabir] Well, nothing of this sort was discussed during our meetings at Cairo. But, today I heard the same talk that you have just indicated. I have nothing really official on this matter as yet.

[Al-Sha'ir] Arab foreign ministers from the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks are supposed to meet in Lebanon by the end of this month. Can you tell us about this meeting, and what are you going to discuss?

[Abu-Jabir] Yes, it will be held by the end of this month. In fact, in the beginning of next month. But needless to say, we will be there by the end of the month. The meeting will concentrate on practically two issues only: One, to reevaluate—or evaluate actually—the fourth round of negotiations that took place in Washington; and second, to try and coordinate positions vis-a-vis the next round of negotiations to be held later on. [end recording]

Invitation to Coordination Meeting Accepted*JN2403152892 Amman Jordan Television Network
in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] Our correspondent for political affairs has said that the Foreign Ministry today received an official invitation from the Lebanese Foreign Ministry to attend a coordination meeting in Beirut. The meeting will bring together the foreign ministers of the Arab countries taking part in the peace conference.

Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir has said that Jordan will attend this meeting, in which an assessment of the past four rounds of talks will be conducted.

Delegation Member on U.S. Role in Peace Talks*JN2503094692 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
25 Mar 92 pp 1, 18*

[Text] Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, member of the Jordanian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, said that Jordan has managed to be a catalyst and an activating force for the peace process, and that all participating parties have acknowledged that peace cannot be established without it.

In a dialogue with JNA, he added that the concept of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace, in Jordan's book, means the right to territories, resources, removing all roots of conflict in the region, peace on all fronts, and refusing to divide the Middle East problem. Jordan's rejection of the bilateral Camp David accords stems from this understanding, he said.

Dr. al-Tarawinah added: We are about to start negotiations on substantial issues in the next round. Jordan has inclined toward peace in line with Resolution 242, which is based on international legitimacy, he said. The Arab interpretation of this resolution is identical to the international and U.S. views, since Resolution 242 emphasizes the UN Charter in terms of the inadmissibility of the occupation of territory by war and Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories, including East Jerusalem.

He also emphasized the U.S. commitment to the peace process, pointing out that the reason the United States has not intervened so far is that no Arab delegation has asked it to do so, especially since the negotiating teams managed to thrash out the procedural issues raised during the second session—primarily Palestinian participation on an equal footing with the Israelis—without U.S. assistance.

He noted that U.S. conduct is supportive of the negotiations. The best evidence of this is U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's emphasis on the need to freeze settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories.

'Reemergence of Arab Solidarity' Praised*JN2303090292 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
23 Mar 92 pp 1, 23*

[Editorial: "Toward a New Arab Reality"]

[Text] Arab support for Libya, as demonstrated at the Arab League ministerial council's meeting yesterday, was an expression of commitment to the League Charter, and to the application of the UN Charter in a way that provides a peaceful and just solution to the problem raised by the West over the Lockerbie incident.

It can be said that the reemergence of Arab solidarity has revived the hope of clearing the Arab atmosphere, and renewed confidence in maintaining and positively translating pan-Arab solidarity.

As they are facing the so-called new world order, the Arabs undoubtedly realize that their chances of asserting their presence in this order will be slim unless they manage to build true Arab solidarity. They also realize that if their fragmentation persists, accusations will continue to be leveled against them.

Therefore, Arab solidarity with Libya was an awakening, though partial and somewhat late, from an Arab coma. Hence, hope remains that this awakening will continue and will assert itself in greater solidarity to eliminate the clouds remaining in Arab skies.

It should be noted that those benefiting from Arab fragmentation will not be pleased by this Arab awakening. Hence, it will not be strange at all if they take a firmer stance toward Libya and try to strike at Arab solidarity. Therefore, the Arabs should take this strong possibility into consideration. They should not allow anyone to return them to the coma which has begun to subside.

Arab solidarity with Libya serves as a starting point toward a new Arab reality. This tendency necessarily requires alertness, perseverance, and determination to overcome all forms and traces of the past negative aspects.

Compromise Seen as 'Much Worse' for Libya

JN2503105492 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
25 Mar 92 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "The Lockerbie Issue and the Arab League's Responsibility"]

[Text] We are afraid that the resolution issued after the Arab League Council's emergency session, under which the League will hand the two Libyan suspects to the United Nations, which will then hand them over to Scotland—where the U.S. airplane crashed—will be a prelude to a series of complications that might put the Libyan Jamahiriya in a much worse and more bitter situation than if it complied with Western pressures to hand over its two citizens to be tried in a foreign country.

This is because it is not at all unlikely that the Libyan citizens will be subjected to all kinds of intimidation and temptation during their interrogation in Scotland or the United States, in order to extract new confessions that could serve as a pretext for holding the Libyan leadership criminally responsible, and making the entire issue an excuse to launch a new aggression against the Libyan people or adopt a series of economic and political sanctions against it.

Hence, we believe that the resolution ordering the delivery of two Libyan citizens for trial in a foreign country is tantamount to submission to Western pressure, and that it could be the start of a number of negative developments on this issue, which is still to be discussed by the International Court of Justice. Ultimately, this resolution could lead to all that the al-Jamahiriyah fears might occur, something which is forcing it to seek a way out of this crisis.

Therefore, we hope that the Arab League, in cooperation with the United Nations, will take the necessary precautions to prevent Libya from falling into the trap prepared for it by the Western countries, especially since the Arab League bears a share of the responsibility no less than that of the United Nations in facilitating the handing over of the two Libyan citizens to Scottish justice.

Finnish Defense Minister Meets With Bin-Shakir

JN2203145592 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic
1400 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, prime minister and defense minister, received Ms. Elisabeth Rehn, Finnish defense minister, in his office at the Armed Forces General Headquarters today.

They reviewed relations between Jordan and Finland in all spheres, and ways to enhance them in the interest of the two friendly nations.

Ms. Rehn arrived in Amman earlier today.

Received by Joint Chiefs Chairman

JN2203185492 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic
1700 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu-Talib, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, received Ms. Elisabeth Rehn, the Finnish defense minister, and the military delegation accompanying her in his office at the Armed Forces General Headquarters this afternoon.

She listened to a briefing by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the development and organization of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

The Finnish defense minister spoke about the Finnish Armed Forces and their role in Europe and around the world.

The two sides exchanged views during the meeting, which was attended by the chief of staff of the Royal Land Forces and the chief of staff of the Royal Air Force.

Syrian Presence in Beirut Reduced Following Clash

NC2403181192 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1700 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Judicial sources have said that the General Military Prosecution received information today on yesterday's incident near the sports complex. A joint committee, comprising the B'abda gendarmerie detachment commander and a Syrian lieutenant colonel, has been commissioned to launch a preliminary investigation into the incident.

The committee's findings have been referred to First Military Magistrate Judge Muhiy Lahhud, who listened to the testimony of a number of the military.

In addition, it has been noticed that the Syrian Army has reduced its presence in the Lebanese capital in the past 24 hours, and removed most of its roadblocks, particularly those on the airport road.

Security Stepped Up for Hizballah Officials

NC2403182292 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1700 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Informed security sources today noted that protective security measures have been enhanced around Hizballah officials, as a precaution against possible Israeli retaliatory operations in the wake of the Israeli Embassy bombing in Argentina.

Birri Criticizes Government, Demands Change

NC2203104592 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon
in Arabic 0545 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Minister Nabih Birri has renewed his campaign against the government, criticizing its performance and method of handling the economic situation. He said this government's performance is lacking many things. One of these is what is called the internal system, which so far has not been implemented. He drew attention to the existence of disputes, deals, and collusion concerning the state. In return, the government has not imposed punishment. It has threatened much, but has never used the stick, not even once. He wondered: Has anyone been put in jail or punished?

Although he believes that Lebanon's participation in the peace talks has led to linking the solution in the south to solutions to other regional problems, Minister Birri said he does not expect a solution to the southern situation in 1992 or 1993.

Responding to a question on his stand regarding the call for a cabinet change or reshuffle, Minister Birri said a reshuffle of portfolios is no longer beneficial enough for this government. There must be a real change which alters its whole course. He pointed out we are now experiencing catastrophes. There isn't a single principle of the al-Ta'if Accord that has been implemented. There isn't a single draft resolution or actual resolution which has been implemented.

Al-Hirawi Interviewed on Foreign Aid, Economy

PM2003111192 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
20 Mar 92 pp 10, 11

[Interview with Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi by Milhim Karam in Beirut; date not given]

[Text] [Karam] Were the results of Lebanon's participation in the negotiations a setback or a surprise for you?

[Al-Hirawi] We went to the negotiations because we wanted peace, but we knew in advance that we would get nothing. Not going would have given Israel a pretext to claim that we did not want peace. That is why we defined the course of peace as we want it and as we understand it; this means that it should be full and undiminished. The most important thing for us is implementation of Resolution 425. I rely on the written assurances I received from those who invited us to these meetings; namely, the United States and Russia—especially the United States, which promised that our participation would produce results beneficial to Lebanon.

[Karam] After the implementation of the greater Beirut plan and the formation of the 30-member cabinet, people became optimistic and said the country would proceed toward recovery and prosperity, but apparently not much has been achieved except for an acceptable degree of stability. Why? Is it because of foreign factors, or are the state departments so old that they require radical reform?

[Al-Hirawi] First, regarding the security decisions, we made these decisions without fear or hesitation. We have united the Army and various areas, and we have deployed the Armed Forces throughout Lebanese territory—particularly in the south—for the first time. That was in defiance of all the groups that held positions in the south. That leaves the resistance. Can any state tell its people not to resist occupation? I said in my speech at the Dakar Islamic conference that this is the people's natural right. I emphasized that the people have a right to liberate their territory. The state, however, does not have to declare war when it is in the phase of searching for peace; but the people suffering injustice in the occupied territories have a right to work for an end to that unjust situation.

After al-Ta'if, Lebanon was promised manna. In view of these promises, it is entitled to hope for much, like all the states ravaged by internal and external wars which have found someone to help them. Without aid, Germany and France would not have been able to recover from their collapse after the world war.

We have been promised, and are entitled to, aid in the amount of \$1 billion—half of it from Arab sources and the other half from international sources—but we have received very little of that. We received \$100 million from the Saudi Kingdom, and we thank His Majesty King Fahd for that. The United Arab Emirates and Kuwait made some contributions, for which we thank

them, and they helped us in rebuilding the Army's camps and some of its equipment, especially vehicles. That is all the aid we received. As far as the aid promised to us, we have contacted the United States and, in reply to our request, were told that there would be no aid if the hostages were not released. The EC states had their own position. We did our best—Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz went to Iran—for the release of all the hostages. There are only the two German hostages left. Of course, Lebanon was not the only party to play an effective role in the release of the hostages. The main role was played by the United Nations and many states which sincerely made a contribution to this matter. Now Germany is requesting the release of the hostages, and is saying that the Lebanese Government can release them. Had that been the case we would have released them a long time ago. Lebanon itself was a hostage. There is a cabinet decision instructing all organs to work steadily and seriously toward finding the location of the two hostages, in order to release them and close this case.

We have concluded agreements with the EC for the reconstruction of Lebanon's infrastructure, with loans from these and other states for the completion of that operation. I do not know why the delivery of these loans is being obstructed. The fact that we have not received any of these loans is the cause of our present bad economic situation. The crisis is not strictly local. The whole world is suffering. Even the United States is having financial difficulties. Economic slogans are being raised in President Bush's election campaign. He is facing difficulties and opposition not because of his foreign policy, but because of his country's economic difficulties. Canada has economic difficulties and Europe and some Arab states have economic difficulties. Most world states wanted the Lebanese war. Some elements acted like dummies, subject to foreign will. Lebanon never wanted the war. It is peaceful by nature. What happened in Lebanon was mostly beyond the Lebanese people's control. That is why the vast majority of the Lebanese people rejected the war. We have come out of that war and have entered a phase of peace. Some people want Lebanon to recover fully at the speed of light, and they want it back to what it was before 1975, on the grounds that we missed out on development during the 17 years of war. That cannot be achieved overnight. Destruction can be accomplished in one second, but rebuilding takes years. The Lebanese are used to luxury and prosperity, and want to rebuild their country's infrastructure quickly.

[Karam] Is the economic crisis a passing affair, or is it so deep as to defy the assurances and guarantees you offer the Lebanese people?

[Al-Hirawi] It is a passing crisis; a crisis of confidence. I do not know why some people want aid for Lebanon to be delayed, and I do not know who these people are.

[Karam] Do you believe that there can be salvation for Lebanon without aid? What if we do not get the aid?

[Al-Hirawi] Not at all. We have an intrinsic ability to resolve issues. Lebanese who were abroad have returned, and they have considerable resources and wealth. We have embarked on a new endeavor to restore Lebanon's health in all aspects, apart from the aid and with our own resources. We are serious about that.

[Karam] Some people and politicians believe that the tug of war between the three leaderships is one of the causes of the political tension prevailing in the country from time to time. Is that a result of the al-Ta'if Accord and unspecified powers, of differences over the interpretation of al-Ta'if, or of rivalry over leadership of the country?

[Al-Hirawi] I wish every leader would discharge the duties assigned to him under the Constitution, with the president of the Republic acting in accordance with the powers vested in him, the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies as head of the legislative authority, and the prime minister as head of the institution called the cabinet doing the same.

Cooperation and coordination among them would be better and more effective; otherwise everyone should act according to the provisions of the Constitution and in the context of his specified powers. Then there would be no disagreement. If the executive authority represented by the cabinet is to blame for anything, then it is accountable to the Chamber of Deputies, not the president of the Republic.

[Karam] Will all aspects of the al-Ta'if Accord be implemented?

[Al-Hirawi] We are serious about implementation of all its articles. Very few remain unimplemented, the most important being the issue of the evacuees. We are doing our best to narrow it down to a certain point and to promote a national reconciliation and understanding for the return of the evacuees to their respective areas, and to promote an atmosphere of amity and fraternal coexistence among the Lebanese people. Regarding the remaining articles of al-Ta'if, such as the personal status issue and the withdrawals issue, we have to prepare the Army and the security forces to take charge of the country's security. I do not believe our Syrian brothers have any objection to withdrawal in accordance with al-Ta'if.

[Karam] When will work begin on the commercial markets?

[Al-Hirawi] Very soon. The demolition will begin next week. The justice minister is activating the committees approved by the cabinet, so that they could assume their duties and begin the evaluations and other tasks assigned to them. There are seven committees.

[Karam] What will happen to the Lebanese pound?

[Al-Hirawi] I believe that Lebanon is moving toward a good and prosperous future, and it will assume a prominent economic role in the region, beyond many people's imagination.

[Karam] And what about the parliamentary elections?

[Al-Hirawi] They will proceed as planned. We will begin with the municipal elections. The first will be held in Beirut.

[Karam] Is the security of the elections guaranteed?

[Al-Hirawi] Let me ask: What guarantees were there in the past for free elections? I say that there will definitely be security and impartiality. We guarantee security. There will be free competition. No candidate will have any privileges over the others. All these are pretexts and claims used by some who are afraid to take part in the elections. At the beginning they were calling for elections, but when we decided to go ahead they opposed that.

Are we to wait for the withdrawals to take place before we hold the elections? What if Israel stayed on for a long time and did not withdraw from our territory?

[Karam] Do you believe Israel will withdraw?

[Al-Hirawi] The way the negotiations are going at the moment does not indicate an imminent Israeli withdrawal. I repeat that the negotiations and their results did not surprise us at all. We knew where we were heading. In a number of statements on the third round of the negotiations, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz defined Lebanon's precise position and its expectations. When we went to the latest round, we were certain that we would achieve nothing and that there would be no results, but Lebanon cannot be seen to be obstructing the negotiations and the peace process.

[Karam] Is it true that you nominated Rafiq al-Hariri for the post of prime minister, and that you made contacts with the Syrian authorities for that purpose?

[Al-Hirawi] Do you think I would do such a thing? Rafiq al-Hariri did not ask, and I did not try. Furthermore, it is not up to the president of the republic to put one person before another, or to appoint a prime minister. It is the task of the deputies and on the basis of certain announced consultations. It is not by association as in the past, when the majority would nominate one person for the post of prime minister and the president would appoint someone else. That kind of talk is irresponsible and is not believed even by those initiate and spread it.

Defense Minister on Obstacles to Army Deployment

NC2203155392 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1215 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr has stressed the need to hold parliamentary elections, maintaining that the present Chamber of Deputies has lost its popular representation status.

Al-Murr also referred to the situation of the Lebanese Army in terms of men and equipment. He noted that the Army is currently unable to deploy in new areas.

[Begin recording] [al-Murr] Regarding the issue of elections, the people have lost confidence. Today, the Chamber of Deputies...

[Unidentified correspondent, interrupting] You said that the present Chamber of Deputies has lost its popular representation status.

[Al-Murr] That is correct. If we go back a little, elections were supposed to have been held in 1976. This Chamber of Deputies was elected in 1972, and the next elections were supposed to have been held in 1976. Then the war started and the Chamber extended its term several times. It was elected in 1972, and it is now 1992. This means it has been in existence for 20 years.

On the military level, the Army needs arms. How can it maintain security? By using its hands? By walking on the streets? We have been trying for the past year to unify the Army and supply it with the necessary weapons, according to our financial means. We tried to do this with the existing forces and equipment. More than half or two-thirds of the military vehicles are still out of action. We managed to maintain security in the areas in which the Army was deployed, but from now on, we must have vehicles, equipment, arms, and ammunition to deploy in any new area in which we are asked to maintain security. This is not yet available. Furthermore, the government cannot provide funds under its current budget. What is needed is not just 1 or 2 million dollars. The budget cannot provide \$100 million for weapons and ammunition, so that the Army can have basic equipment and vehicles. In view of this situation, as well as the need to increase the number of troops—there is a need for an additional 15,000 troops so the Army can assume security responsibility for the entire country, as stipulated by the al-Ta'if Accord—a huge sum will be needed to equip and clothe them. All these things prompt me to say that starting now... [pauses] Of course, I was addressing the West in particular, because the Army vehicles, which were destroyed during the inter-Christian war, are mostly Western-made; U.S.-made or French-made. Some of this equipment has been the subject of an embargo—in other words, no spare parts are being supplied for this equipment. Therefore, if the Army is required to deploy in new areas, it will not be able to.

What is the connection between elections and the issue of withdrawal? When the Lebanese Government has the resources to take over any area in Lebanon, it takes over, and there is a withdrawal. [end recording]

Buwayz on Damascus Talks, Election Prospects

NC2203100092 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
0915 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said that President Ilyas al-Hirawi's visit to Damascus comes when the

country and the region are going through extraordinary events. This stage requires discussion and the exchange of opinions between Lebanon, Syria, and the Arab brothers.

In an interview with VOL, the foreign minister affirmed that the cordons states' meeting will take place in Beirut at the beginning of April, but he did not specify a fixed date due to certain problems, one of which is the 'Id al-Fitr.

Regarding parliamentary elections, Buwayz said he does not favor holding these elections now due to a number of factors, most important of which is that the militias still possess huge funds, media which have great influence, and effective civilian establishments, all of which affect elections, according to Buwayz.

He referred to other factors which prevent the holding of elections, some of which are the refugee and security strip issues. In addition, the state has not completed its deployment, nor has it been able to fully control the security situation, which would cast doubt on any election results. He considers the election's objective to be that of truthfully expressing the national will.

Buwayz on Peace Talks, Arab Coordination

NC2003184592 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1700 GMT 20 Mar 92

[Text] Editors Doyen Milhim Karam cited Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz as saying that Lebanon did not go to the peace conference negotiations until it received messages and assurances about Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the implementation of Resolution 425. He noted that the Arab-Israeli peace conference is historic, comparing it to the Versailles and Yalta conferences. Treating it superficially is therefore impermissible, Buwayz is quoted as saying.

Karam says that Buwayz believes that Lebanon should continue its participation in the peace conference, and that it should give the United States time to consolidate its pressure on Israel.

Buwayz said that the absence of the Arabs and Lebanon from the conference would give enemy Prime Minister Shamir the pretext to prove his view that the blame lies with the Arabs. He said that he knows that Israeli officials will react negatively to the issues raised, and will avoid the peace conference's requirements.

Buwayz told Karam that Syria and the Palestinians have also received certain assurances. He said those assurances include guarantees about Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, about the implementation of Resolution 242, and about the beginning of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis on final autonomy.

Buwayz stressed that permanent Arab coordination is needed, noting that he has invited the foreign ministers of the countries concerned to meet in Beirut early next

month to assess the previous phase, and to prepare for the political techniques required to confront future situations.

Buwayz Regrets 'Fall of Innocent Victims'

NC2303085992 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0530 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz stated that Lebanon has suffered much from violence, and that the Lebanese Government had nothing to do with it. We can also affirm that the Lebanese Government regrets the fall of innocent victims. The subject must be studied, because repeated Israeli attacks, Israel's repression of the region's people, and the deprivation of their rights are the main reasons for this violence. We call for ending this violence by dealing with its root causes. We believe that pushing the peace conference forward and helping it achieve its aims, which revolve around Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, will halt violence in the world.

Minister Calls for 'Radical Government Change'

NC2203105092 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0530 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Speech delivered by Lebanese Education Minister Butrus Harb to a graduation ceremony at the Information and Documentation College; place, date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Such an occasion should not pass without clearly, frankly, and accurately stating what we think about the serious and delicate phase we are experiencing, and without briefly dealing with your role in criticism and guidance.

We cannot be allowed to fail, after the Lebanese people's bitter experience, the vast destruction of the homeland, and our serious attempts to rescue the country. Nobody will consider it strange when I say, from my position of responsibility, that events so far have not been what the Lebanese people hoped for to end their crisis, despite some positive developments. Mistakes keep mounting, corruption remains widespread, and amateurs' actions outweigh those of the professionals. Overnight, we find ourselves moving from one mistake to another, from one that causes destruction, loss, and poverty to a more serious mistake that causes further destruction and poverty.

It is time someone in a responsible position raised a voice to put an end to the amateurs' actions, giving the many who believe in Lebanon, those numerous who have qualifications, and the conscientious and the authors—who are also plentiful in Lebanon—the chance to run the country's affairs, so that we can move from amateurishness and procrastination to decisiveness, and so emerge from the dark tunnel. [applause]

We cannot watch our people pay from their own pocket for the mistakes (‘amateurs’) are committing everywhere.

We cannot look on as an officials cover up for those who violate the law. We cannot watch an official hesitate to strike at the hand that robs the people. We cannot look on as Lebanon falls and its people suffer hunger and worry. We cannot turn back as our procession marches forward. We must assume our responsibilities, confront our destiny, and change what is happening. If we have kept quiet about events so far it is only because we believed our silence would help right the crookedness and rectify things.

I believe it is a crime to keep quiet about events and it is high time we shouted out that we will do so no more, and will expose all the violations and all the mistakes, and halt the collapse. We are not prepared to keep quiet, even once, about what is happening and causing pain to our people, who have had enough of suffering, being displaced, and starving. [applause]

We all know the atmosphere in which we are working. I hope that this day will not end before a decision is made for a radical government change. [applause]

After all that has been happening, it is impermissible to say everything is alright. [applause]

Man Arrested Smuggling Documents to Libya

*NC2303183192 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1700 GMT 23 Mar 92*

[Text] Customs officers at Beirut Airport have arrested a man named Ahmad Rida Diyab, born in 1945 in Hawsh al-Rafiqah, Ba'labakk, while he was trying to board a flight to Libya. The officers discovered 16 passports of assorted Arab nationalities, microfilm, and 10 Jordanian birth certificates in a false bottom of his suitcase.

The suspect and the seized documents were given to the airport security office. The Jabal Lubnan Public Prosecutor's Office, which was informed of the arrest, ordered the prisoner transferred to B'abda for interrogation.

Army Fires on Israeli Gunboats Near Sidon

*NC2503102692 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain
in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 25 Mar 92*

[Text] Israeli gunboats came near the southern coast near Sidon at 1030 today. The Lebanese Army responded by opening fire on them.

Al-Asad Confers With Lebanese Officials 24 Mar

JN2403214592 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] At 1245 today, President Hafiz al-Asad received Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi; Husayn al-Husayni, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies; and Lebanese Prime Minister 'Umar Karami.

The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi.

The meeting, which was interrupted by a Ramadan dinner at the president's table, discussed issues related to cooperation between the two fraternal countries. Also discussed was the effort to implement the Lebanese national reconciliation accord and activate the agencies of the Lebanese state, to allow them to shoulder their responsibilities both now and in the future.

The president stressed that Syria will give Lebanon every degree of support and backing it asks for, under all circumstances.

[Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic at 0530 GMT on 25 March in a similar report adds: "Speaker al-Husayni said that during last night's meeting at President al-Hirawi's residence, discussions centered on all issues and the government position. He added that the atmosphere was positive and everyone's efforts were focused on continuing the process of saving the country. He said that two meetings will be held this morning: First the three Lebanese leaders will meet with Khaddam and al-Zu'bi, then they will meet with President al-Asad before returning to Beirut.")]

Chief Delegate on UN Role in Peace Talks

JN2403155492 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 23 Mar 92 p 11

[Interview with Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, by 'Assaf 'Abbud in Damascus; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] ['Abbud] Syria has suggested that if no progress is realized in the bilateral talks, then Syria will demand that the issue be presented to the Security Council again. Is this suggestion still standing?

[Al-'Allaf] This is an option that every Arab party should keep in mind. The peace process is based on two resolutions adopted by the Security Council. Israel has employed pressure for the United Nations not to participate directly in the peace process. If progress is realized without UN participation, the Arabs may remain silent concerning this absence. If no progress is realized, we will not relinquish our right, as stated by the UN Charter, to refer the subject to the United Nations and the Security Council. If it fails to take action, then the General Assembly may hold an extraordinary session and adopt resolutions having the same binding nature as

the Security Council resolutions. There are several precedents for such a scenario. But we still believe that it is in the interest of the U.S. Administration—which, so far, is showing some degree of seriousness—that progress be realized in the talks. The U.S. Administration's position on the building of settlements and the loan guarantees is evidence of its commitment to the peace process. If President Bush is reelected, and this is very likely, he will be in a position that enables him to use his influence to render the peace process a success without facing pressures that prevent him from doing so.

If, after the U.S. and Israeli elections, we find that no progress has been realized and that the peace process will not restore Arab rights and will not secure Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, then the Arab countries will discuss what should be done, and resort to the United Nations. This is something natural in such a case, especially since the United Nations was used, and is still being used, to realize what is said about the new world order by exerting pressure on countries that occupied other countries' territories or committed aggression on others. The United Nations should use all its powers, in the form of sanctions or a boycott, to implement its resolutions. Then, the Arabs should insist that the United Nations deal with the Israeli occupation, which is one of the ugliest and longest occupations, with the same toughness with which it deals with any other occupation. [passage omitted]

Assembly Endorses Nonproliferation Safeguards

JN2403201392 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Excerpt] The People's Assembly held a meeting this morning, headed by Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah and attended by a number of ministers.

At the beginning of the meeting, Assembly members' written questions were read and referred to the competent authorities through the Prime Ministry.

The Assembly heard a report by the Services Committee and the Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the draft law on endorsing the agreement to provide Syria with a small nuclear reactor, concluded in Vienna between Syria, the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], and China.

Several members spoke about the report and stressed the importance of this agreement, which contributes to the training of technical cadres, the process of coping with scientific progress, and entering the field of nuclear research for peaceful purposes.

After deliberation, the Assembly endorsed the draft law. The Assembly then heard a report by the Services Committee, Pan-Arab Security Committee, and the Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the draft law on endorsing the comprehensive safeguards agreement attached to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, signed in Vienna between Syria and the IAEA.

A number of Assembly members spoke about the report and pointed out that Syria signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1969. They emphasized that this agreement constitutes a positive contribution to ridding the region of nuclear weapons, and subjecting nuclear reactors in the region to safeguards agreements and international inspection.

Following deliberation, the Assembly endorsed the draft law. [passage omitted]

Khaddam, Talas Receive Finnish Defense Minister

JN2303191292 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] At 1600 today, Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Mrs. Elisabeth Rehn, the Finnish defense minister. During the meeting, they reviewed the situation in the region, the peace process, and the situation in Lebanon.

General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and the Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, received Mrs. Rehn and her delegation at his office this evening. The Finnish ambassador

in Damascus attended the meeting. The talks centered on relations between the Syrian Arab Army and the Finnish Army, and ways to develop them.

The Finnish defense minister arrived in Damascus on a cordial visit, during which she will inspect the Finnish contingent to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force in the Golan.

Gen Talas Receives Irish Defense Minister

JN2203160492 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander in chief of the Army and Armed Forces, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, received Mr. John Wilson, deputy prime minister and defense minister of the Irish Republic, and his delegation before noon today. They explored the possibility for further enhancement of the friendly ties between the Syrian and Irish Armies, in the interest of the people of the two countries.

The guest minister arrived in Damascus on a cordial visit, during which he is to visit the UN disengagement forces in the Golan Heights.

Bangladesh

'Fear of Violence' After Rightist's Arrest

BK2503064092 Hong Kong AFP in English 0622 GMT
25 Mar 92

[Text] Dhaka, March 25 (AFP)—Fear of violence grew in the Bangladesh capital Wednesday following the arrest of a right-wing politician, with sources saying demonstrators were pouring in from the provinces to hold rallies.

Police went to Golam Azam's residence at midnight Tuesday and served him with a one-month detention before taking him to Dhaka's high security Central Jail, police said.

Deposed president Hussain Mohammad Ershad is also an inmate at Central Jail.

Activists and leaders of the rightist Jamaat-e-Islami party led by Azam were present in and around the residence during the arrest.

Informed sources said hundreds of Jamaat supporters were pouring into Dhaka to join rallies.

A committee planning to hold a "mock trial for Azam for his alleged role in support of Pakistan during Bangladesh's war of independence from Islamabad in 1971 remained adamant despite government steps to diffuse the tension.

Azam was put under detention early Tuesday after the government had found his reply to an official notification unacceptable.

The notice accused him of violating the constitution by becoming the party chief "despite being a foreign national" and asked to show why he should not be expelled from the country. The government contends that Azam is a Pakistani citizen.

Jahanara Imam, the convenor of the symbolic public trial, said the trial would take place as scheduled Thursday, Bangladesh's 21st independence anniversary, as Azam had not been arrested on charges of war crimes.

The committee holds that Azam's alleged collaboration with the Pakistani army led to the deaths of thousands of Bangladeshis.

A top committee member told AFP they "were taking steps for a meeting Wednesday with the government to come to an amicable understanding and contemplating dropping the word court with a suitable substitute."

Committee sources said they would respond Wednesday to the government notice asking Imam and her associates why they should not be prosecuted for tarnishing the image of the established courts.

A spokesman for the committee criticised the government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia saying such action was uncalled for and "unexpected from a democratic government."

Analysts said the situation was a test case for Zia, "who had the final responsibility of settling the issue (and) much to lose if the country is plunged into a crisis."

War veterans, cultural and political groups, teachers and students have lent their support to the trial by marching on Dhaka streets for the past several days, which also saw sporadic clashes between rival groups.

On his part, Golam Azam said the government had given into "terrorism" by arresting and declaring him a foreign national, which he claimed could bring the fall of Zia's government.

"We helped this government to be formed ... that's how I get paid for my courtesy," Azam told the domestic UNITED NEWS OF BANGLADESH hours before his arrest Tuesday midnight.

Jamaat leader Abbas Ali Khan said the notice was a "breach of understanding between my party and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government," claiming they had an understanding on Azam's citizenship when it helped Zia form her government last year.

He said government steps was pushing the country towards anarchy.

Khan said Tuesday that they would deal the situation "politically and legally" if Azam was arrested or deported.

Army on Alert; War With Burma Ruled Out

BK2303075692 Hong Kong AFP in English
0743 GMT 23 Mar 92

[By Nadeem Qadir]

[Text] Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, March 23 (AFP)—The problem of the influx of refugees from Burma cannot be solved by going to war with Rangoon, but Bangladesh is alert to defend its sovereignty, a senior military officer said here.

"The refugee issue is basically political and needed to be solved at the diplomatic level, but a war is not an answer for the crisis," the officer who is closely monitoring military developments in Burma told AFP [AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE].

He said a military confrontation would be a "no win war."

"But, we are alert in case Bangladesh's sovereignty is threatened," he stressed.

Security officials said Bangladesh had completed deploying "several thousand" troops including a composite brigade of infantry, artillery, signals and engineering units on the 281-kilometer (176-mile) border with Burma.

"We are closely monitoring military developments on the other side, following the Burmese troop build-up, but our position is purely defensive," one said.

Relations were strained and tension mounted between the two Asian neighbours for the first time since Bangladesh's independence in 1971 after Burmese Lanthin border guards attacked a Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) outpost on December 21, killing a soldier and three other people.

The incident came amid an increased flow of Moslem refugees from Burma's Arakan border state into south-eastern Bangladesh, fleeing their homes because of alleged atrocities, including rape and torture by Burmese soldiers.

Nearly 200,000 refugees, known as Rohingyas, are now sheltered in 10 camps in the Cox's Bazar district and hundreds more are pouring in daily, government officials here said.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Khaleda Zia also ruled out a "military confrontation" with Burma when she returned home Monday from a five-day trip to the United States during which she held talks with President George Bush on the crisis.

Zia said the scope for resolution of the refugee problem through negotiations had not been exhausted, and Dhaka "making every effort toward that direction."

But she voiced suspicion of Burmese intentions, saying, "Myanmar (Burma) has mobilized troops on our borders, but I wonder (about) its purpose."

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman had stayed back in New York for consultations "with concerned quarters" on the crisis, official sources said without elaborating.

Defence sources said sporadic contact between the BDR and Lanthin continued, but a major problem was that the Burmese had no immediate answers to proposals or questions from the Bangladesh side because they had to refer everything to Rangoon.

"They are very rigid," one officer close to the process said.

Intelligence sources confirmed that refugee claims of torture and persecution were correct, but said they perhaps exaggerated at times to drum up sympathy for their cause.

Asked how long it would take to resolve the refugee issue, one source said it seemed "a long process, but much depended on diplomatic efforts."

While an international refugee official responded: "Do you have a crystal ball?"

DPRK Economic Minister Arrives in Dhaka

BK2203162992 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] The North Korean external economic affairs minister, Chong Song-nam, arrived in Dhaka today on a four-day official visit to Bangladesh. Mr. Chong is leading a four-member economic and trade delegation. Talking to newsmen at the airport, the North Korean minister said his country is eager to strengthen the economic and trade relations with Bangladesh. During the talks in Dhaka, the two sides will identify areas for increased cooperation between Bangladesh and North Korea in various sectors.

Joint Economic Commission Established

BK2303155792 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] Bangladesh and North Korea have signed an agreement to set up a joint economic commission—JEC—to promote and identify different areas for further economic, trade, and technical cooperation. The agreement was signed in Dhaka today following talks between the Bangladesh officials and the visiting DPRK delegation. Finance Minister Saifur Rahman led the Bangladesh delegation, while the DPRK delegation leader, Chong Song-Nam, led his country at the talks. Two technical committees were formed at the talks to work out the details of bilateral cooperation.

Earlier, the leader of the visiting four-member DPRK delegation met Finance Minister Saifur Rahman who explained the Rohingya Muslim problem now being faced by Bangladesh. The delegation also called on Commerce Minister M. K. Anwar.

India

BJP Says CPI Received \$500,00 From KGB

BK2303113892 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] The alleged receipt of funds to the tune of \$500,000 from the Russian intelligence agency, KGB, by the CPI [Communist Party of India] was raised in the Lok Sabha today by the members of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. The leader of the opposition, Mr. L. K. Advani, referred to a report in a section of the press and charged that it has wider ramifications than even the Bofors payoffs. He said that even earlier there had been charges that the communist movement had been receiving foreign funds. The minister of state for parliamentary affairs, Mr. P.R. Kumaramangalam, said there is no firm report on the issue. He said that the government is going to have a discussion on electoral reforms with leaders of all parties and the issue can come up in

any form. He also requested the speaker that if he so desires, he can have a meeting of leaders of various parties to take up the matter in whatever manner it is decided.

CPI Denies Receiving Funds

*BK2303165192 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1530 GMT 23 Mar 92*

[Text] The Communist Party of India [CPI] has strongly refuted reports appearing in a section of the press that it had received funds from the KGB of the former Soviet Union. A statement issued in New Delhi today said there was no question of CPI receiving any funds from abroad. The issue figured in the Lok Sabha today with the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] demanding a statement from the government and a full investigation into the matter.

4 Pakistani Troops Killed in Kashmir Shooting

*BK2403144692 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1430 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] Delayed reports from Jammu say at least four Pakistani soldiers were killed in an exchange of fire between Indian and Pakistani troops last Saturday [21 March]. According to defense sources the Pakistani troops opened unprovoked firing on the Indian positions in Naushahra, Kargil, and Chhamb sectors. The Indian troops returned the fire. One soldier on the Indian side sustained injuries in the exchange.

Spokesman Discusses Talks With Israeli Official

*BK2503101292 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information
Service in English 0915 GMT 25 Mar 92*

["Spokesman's briefing regarding talks between Mr. Moshe Yegar, deputy director general in Israel, and Indian officials, dated 23 March 1992"]

[Text] While briefing newsmen, the spokesman stated that Deputy Director General Mr. Moshe Yegar of Israel had first-ever official talks with Indian officials today (23 March) since diplomatic relations between India and Israel were raised to ambassadorial level. Mr. Yegar's counterpart in India is Mr. I.P. Khosla, secretary (West) in the Ministry of External Affairs [MEA]. Both sides viewed the talks as being a good beginning in the bilateral relationship between India and Israel.

They both recognised that in the fast-changing situation in West Asia, both India and Israel would stand to benefit from an improved bilateral relationship. They both outlined the great potential for greater cooperation that exists in several fields, particularly in the fields of culture, where they spoke of increasing the number of visits of leading cultural personalities from Israel to India and vice-versa.

In the context of the fact that both India and Israel are ancient civilisations with a rich historical tradition, they saw that there was great scope for undertaking work of

translation of classics in Hebrew and Sanskrit and other ancient Indian languages. We were informed that the Israeli side would like to work towards reviving the chair which used to exist in Israel.

We discussed the possibilities of collaboration in the field of agriculture. Arid zones and dryland farms were the two areas which were identified for exchange of information and techniques. Likewise, in the field of science and technology, we discussed ways and means of promoting contact between institutions of excellence in India and their counterparts in Israel. In particular, in the field of medicine, we talked about the possibility of a premier medical institution in this country forging links with the Hadasa Medical Centre in Israel.

Mr. Yegar outlined the enormous potential that exists in every walk of life for enhanced cooperation between our two countries. He availed of the opportunity of his first contact with Indian officials in MEA today to thank them for the great cooperation extended to him when he came at a very short notice in June last year on a humanitarian mission to assist in securing the release of some of Israeli nation who had been involved in an incident of terrorism in Srinagar.

Mr. Yegar will be meeting the foreign secretary and officials in ministries of tourism and agriculture. He will also be meeting the minister of state for external affairs.

Foreign Investment Allowed in Capital Market

*BK2503085492 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network
in English 1600 GMT 24 Mar 92*

[Text] The government has decided to give permission to some of the Indian companies with a good track record to issue convertibles and equity shares directly to investors abroad. Inaugurating a Euromoney conference on trade and investment in New Delhi today, the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, said that the tax benefits applicable to offshore mutual funds would be extended to these issues. Dr. Singh said that the government would also consider suitable ways of enabling reputable foreign investors to invest in the Indian capital market. He said the government is committed to carry out comprehensive amendments to the Foreign Exchange Regulations Act to make it compatible with the new liberalized exchange rate management.

Iran

Nationwide Majles Elections Scheduled for 10 April

Breakdown of Majles Seats Per Province

*LD2303173392 Tehran IRNA in English 1343 GMT
23 Mar 92*

[Text] Tehran, March 23, IRNA—A total of 270 deputies will be elected to the fourth term of the Islamic

Consultative Assembly (Majles) out of the 3,103 applicants who have signed up for the nationwide elections to be held on April 10.

Tehran Province with 37 seats ranks first while the provinces of Ilam and Kohgiluyeh-Buyersahmad with two deputies will occupy the lowest number of seats at the Majles.

The following is a table of the provinces and their number of seats at the Majles:

Province	Number of Deputies
Tehran	37
Khorasan	25
East Azerbaijan	24
Isfahan	18
Khuzestan, Fars, and Mazandaran	17 each
Gilan	13
West Azerbaijan	12
Kerman	10
Hamedan, Zanjan	9 each
Bakhtiari, Lorestan	8 each
Sistan-Baluchistan, Ostian-e	7 each
Kordestan	6 each
Hormozgan, Semnan	4 each
Bahleir, Yasd, Chahar Mahall va Bakhtiari	3 each
Kohgiluyeh va Buyer Ahmadi, Ilam	2 each

Meanwhile, five deputies represent religious minorities at the Majles, one for Zoroastrians, one for Jews, one for Assyrians and two for Armenians (from the north and south).

75 Withdraw From Elections

LD2303184592 Tehran IRNA in English 1010 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 22, IRNA—Another group of 15 candidates have announced their withdrawal from the fourth term of the Majles elections. This brings to 75 the total number of those who have withdrawn.

Thus, only 3,133 candidates from 196 constituencies will compete in the nationwide poll on April 10, provided that their qualifications are approved by the Interior Ministry.

All those who have signed up have been informed by the Interior Ministry to refer to their constituencies personally to receive the result of the investigation into their qualification.

Election campaign starts on April 2 and will last for one week.

Minority Candidates Register

LD2403173392 Tehran IRNA in English 1318 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 24, IRNA—A total of 25 candidates from religious minorities have registered for the parliamentary polls to be held on April 10.

They will contest the five seats reserved for them in the Islamic Consultative Assembly once their credentials are approved by the election monitoring boards.

The 270-seat parliament also called Majles, has one seat each for the Zoroastrians, the Jews and the Assyrian-Chaldean Christian sect, while two other minority seats are reserved for the Armenians from the northern and southern parts of the country who with 200,000 members form the largest minority community in Iran.

The number of minority candidates who contested the second and third four-year terms of the Majles were 17.

10,000 To Oversee Elections

LD2003223692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Mar 92

[Text] 10,000 people will be responsible for the control, observation, supervision, and inspection of the Majles elections within the framework of inspection teams of the nationwide elections. They will carry out their duties in three stages: The pre-election phase, the election phase, and the post-election phase, so that the elections are carried out better than ever before. One of the officials of the election supervisory center based in the Interior Ministry announced the above news during an interview with IRNA before noon today and said: To implement the guidelines of His Eminence the Imam [Khomeyni], may God have mercy on His soul, and the leadership [Khamene'i] on the holding of free and healthy elections and the correct implementation of election laws and regulations, after warning from inspectors, cases of violation will be reported to and dealt with by the competent authorities—inspection teams, offices of Friday imams, governor-generals, and governors.

He continued: The major cases of violation that have occurred so far have been campaign violations that have resulted from a lack of the correct understanding of the laws.

Security Teams To Supervise Polls

LD2203230192 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Candidates for the fourth Islamic Majles can go to their constituency center from tomorrow to find out the results of the investigations into their eligibility. According to an IRNA report, the supervisor of the state elections headquarters, announcing this, added: The outcome of investigations will be revealed to the candidates in person only.

The security headquarters for the fourth Majles elections has been set up in the Interior Ministry. The official in charge of security affairs of the elections, stating this, said: The task of this headquarters is to eliminate any security obstacle and to protect the polling stations and the voting booths. He added: In this connection 24 security teams have been set up all over the country under the supervision of the political and security deputy of the governor general and with the participation of intelligence, security, and judicial officials and governors of each province. These teams are in charge of full supervision of the security aspects of the polling stations.

He went on: The teams also provide air support in the remote and mountainous areas so as to enable the people in these areas to vote in the elections. For this purpose 45 helicopters will carry members of these teams to these regions.

Elections 'Artificial, Superficial'

NC2103143092 (*Clandestine*) *Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian* 1730 GMT 15 Mar 92

[Unattributed commentary: "Elections With Which Even Former Regime Elements are Dissatisfied"]

[Excerpts] Dear listeners, the approach of the so-called elections to the fourth term of the Majles finds the various factions in the Islamic Republic and the regime's old friends and agents expressing their opinions on the poll more openly.

As in previous elections, the clerics are paving the way and the preliminaries, trying to stop the people's true representatives standing and being elected because much of the nature and policy of the dictatorial clerics' regime is to create obstacles in the elections of the true representatives of the people and to stop them entering the Majles.

The Constitution of the mullahs' regime, with its anti-popular and reactionary nature, opposes free and democratic elections and the people's participation in government. The clerics' election preparations aim to give a particular Majles faction the upper hand and to drive out some of the recognized pawns. [passage omitted]

The clerical regime's officials will not permit the people's true representatives or those who sometimes disagree with the government and leader to enter the Majles, proving how different is the moderate faction, the government and the so-called pragmatic and realistic president, from the extremist faction when it comes to monopoly seeking and violating democracy and freedom.

Even many of those who support the regime are criticizing the elections, which have been arranged by Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Khamene'i and which will be held in Farvardin [20 March-21 April].

These elections are so artificial and superficial that only one regime faction, Khamene'i and Hashemi-Rafsanjani's, is satisfied. Former prime ministers and ministers of the regime, such as Bazargan, Foruhar, and even some of the clerics in the ruling party, have already labelled the elections a farce. There is an adage that says the soup was so salty even the cook had to agree!

Karrubi on Electoral Rivalries

PM2503100892 *London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic* 18-24 Mar 92 pp 28-31

[Interview with Iranian Majles Speaker Mehdi Karrubi by Fahmi Huwaydi; place, date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Huwaydi] What do you call the two tendencies competing in the elections?

[Karrubi] That is a problem. Some people call them left and right, moderate and hard-liners, or conservatives and revolutionaries. I cannot go into the names, especially since the two tendencies have no clear organizational framework. All I can say is that they represent two different schools in terms of understanding the imam's [Khomeyni's] teachings and the Islamic revolution's program. Such a difference is bound to lead to a difference in their positions on some economic and political problems. For example, we call for state intervention in the economy in favor of the destitute and the disadvantaged. The other tendency, however, calls for a free economy and for a reduction of the state's role in this domain. Nevertheless we do not disagree about everything. In fact there we agree on many foreign and Arab political issues, and, first and foremost, on our position on the Palestine issue.

[Huwaydi] The present picture indicates a sharp conflict between the two tendencies, which means that there is no real evidence for playing down the dispute between them, as you do. The experiment of the Council of Experts elections, in which representatives of the "Rohani" ruhaniyun tendency (hard-liners) has a significance that is known to all.

[Karrubi] That depends on the angle from which you look at the issue and whether you are considering the relationship between the two tendencies from the angle of agreement or disagreement. I do not deny that some are trying to remove others from the arena. Some individuals have been quoted as saying that they would bar our way with every available means. But these are personal views which does not necessarily reflect the position of the country's political leadership. True, the Council of Experts experiment was regrettable, and the measures taken against some people were not sound, but the Consultative Assembly's responsibility is more important and greater. So any interference in it would be a big mistake against the revolution and the people. [passage omitted]

[Huwaydi] There are two points apart from the elections which prompt certain questions and some concern on

the Arab scene. The first concerns the idea of exporting the revolution. The second concerns recent relations between Iran and Sudan. Do you have anything to say in this regard?

[Karrubi] (laughing) Unfortunately, some circles in the Arab world heed the hostile propaganda against us, rather than trying to understand our positions. The revolution is not a commodity exported from one place to another. It is a set of values and principles which we defend everywhere within the context of our respect for our neighbors and our commitment not to interfere in any state's internal affairs. After Iraq's occupation of Kuwait everyone knew who was trying to swallow up land and to overthrow regimes, and who was defending values and principles.

As for Sudan, there some people who want to stir up a storm in order to harm Tehran and Khartoum on the basis of tendentious and distorted information. Our view is that Sudan is a Muslim country under pressure and a siege, and it is our duty to stand by it and to support it politically and economically. Our political support for it is stated and known. As for supporting it economically, this has been done through loans provided to the Khartoum government on easy terms.

[Huwaydi] Some people talk about the presence of the Revolutionary Guard in Sudan.

[Karrubi] That is what we hear in the propaganda designed to distort the situation and to drive a wedge between us. My information is that there is not a single Iranian soldier in Sudan.

*Restrictions on Candidates Noted

92AS0748A Tehran SALAM in Persian
18 Feb 92 p 2

[Text] The previous note explained that if the variety of candidates is restricted by the legal or executive authorities, rightly or wrongly, the voters might find themselves facing a dilemma: On the one hand, whether or not to participate at all, and on the other hand, if they participate in the elections, to give a blank vote and in that way protest the restrictions imposed.

The first way is not, on the one hand, in the interests of the regime and the country, because it will result in the political reaction of a number of people. On the other hand, it is logically wrong, because the necessary requirements, which are the votes of the people, are in terms of the issue negated, and, on the whole, contradicts the spirit of republicanism and the Constitution, which gives the people the right to determine their own destiny. Hence, the conditions must be prepared so as to ensure that all those interested in politics and those who are waiting for an opportunity to participate in the political fate of their own country are able to participate in the elections.

In our opinion, the second way is also in some ways a violation of the people's rights and cannot be condoned.

But when the first way is blocked, those who impose restrictions had better test this way in order to know how many people are protesting the imposed restriction.

In this case, we can find out from the blank votes to what extent the legal, implemental, and personal taste restrictions on the competence of candidates are remote from the customs of the society, and to what extent they deprive a number of people from determining their own destinies, and have weakened the foundations of the necessary requirement, which is the vote of the people.

In order to clarify the issue, once more we will look at the election for the Assembly of Experts. In the Province of Tehran, 15 people were to be elected and only 16 qualified candidates were introduced by the Council of Guardians. Considering that the standard for elections was also a relative vote, which means that if 1 of the 16 persons mentioned only voted for himself and the remaining 15 persons received votes from themselves and their spouses, all the 15 people with 2 votes would be regarded as representatives of the people of the province of Tehran in the Assembly of Experts, even if no one other than these 31 people participated in the elections. In some provinces, in which the number of candidates was equal to or less than the number needed, it was sufficient for one person, that is, the candidate himself, to vote for himself to be elected as the representative of the people. With these explanations, it becomes clear that the people, in legal terms, have had no negative or affirmative effect on those elections, and this proves the claim that if the vote of the people is accepted as the necessary requirement, it means that it must also be accepted in order for this vote to play its role in the legitimacy of what is voted for.

We will conclude this discussion with an anecdote about the former Soviet Union. In the Soviet system, in order to elect a mayor, a few people were introduced by the Communist Party as candidates, and the people were obliged to choose their candidate from among a limited number of people. In one election in the city of Leningrad (the name has probably changed to Petersburg now), the number of blank votes was much more than that of supporting votes for the mayoral candidate; hence, the government did not declare the blank votes void and instead introduced another person, who was elected in the next election.

We hope to continue this discussion in the future.

Editorial: Tension With Switzerland Continues

NC2203164592 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES
INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY in English 12 Mar 92
p 2

[Editorial: "Tension Between Iran and Switzerland"]

[Text] Political tension between Iran and Switzerland still continues, and it is even expected to acquire more extended dimensions in the coming days.

The continued detention of Zia' Sarhadi, the employee of the Iranian Embassy, and the announcement that he is to be handed over to the French police, has worsened the situation. Informed sources in Tehran reject the Swiss government's claim that Sarhadi was in complicity with the murderers of Shahpur Bakhtiari, the last prime minister in the previous regime in Iran. The sources further specify that documents proving Sarhadi's innocence have been delivered to the Swiss authorities, and they reject in particular the idea that Sarhadi had been in Switzerland in mid-August.

Zia' Sarhadi was a simple employee working at the embassy as an ordinary servant. He was not a political person and could have nothing to do with politics.

And although it is said that the documents are quite clear and unambiguous, it is not known for what reasons the Swiss authorities intend to disrupt their relations with Tehran.

And the most astonishing aspect of the whole affair is the fact that the Swiss enjoy good reputation in legal matters on an international level. And now such a country with such an international reputation has decided to hand over the citizen of a foreign country to a third country without having proven that the man is actually guilty of the charges leveled at him.

Political observers anticipate that in case the Swiss government delivers Sarhadi to the French authorities without offering convincing evidences to the Iranian government, Iran still then be entitled to adopt the same procedure towards the Swiss citizens residing in Iran.

The same political observers add that Iranian officials are at the moment busying studying the agreements concluded by the Swiss companies in Iran.

Among the subjects being carefully studied is the Swiss government's status as representative of the U.S. interests in Iran.

A specific idea is gradually gaining ground in Tehran to the effect that a country which is on hostile terms with Iran could not represent the interests of a third country in Iran. It should also be kept in mind that the Swiss as the intermediary between Iran and America have access to the sort of secret documents and information which would ordinarily be made known to a third government which both sides can always trust.

What is certain is that Iran has exhibited its good will in the present crisis by giving its consent to Sarhadi's being interrogated by a French judicial delegation in Berne. This would seem to prove clearly that Iran does not wish to cause the tension to spread to uncontrollable extent.

Russian Muslim Revival Program Shown in Iran

*LD2403153292 Tehran IRNA in English 1425 GMT
22 Mar 92*

[Text] Orumiye, West Azarbaijan Prov., March 22, IRNA—The television of Moscow broadcast a special program Saturday night concerning the rapid revival of Islam in the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union.

The film showed tens of thousands of Muslims gathering together and saying prayers at mosques and public squares in cities and capitals of the Muslim republics on the occasion of the auspicious month of Ramadhan and Nowruz (new year) festivity.

The program, aired at 22:30 hours Moscow time [1930 GMT] and monitored in the Iranian border town of Poldasht, highlighted the revival of Islam in the newly independent republics as well as of Nowruz which it described as a traditional festivity of the peoples of the Muslim countries.

Meanwhile, the Nakhechevan television in an unprecedented program Saturday evening broadcast Azan (call for prayers) followed by speeches by several local Muslims on the significance of the fasting month of Ramadhan.

German 'Smear Campaign' on Islam Advocate Seen

*LD2403174492 Tehran IRNA in English 1147 GMT
24 Mar 92*

[Text] Bonn, March 24, IRNA—German Ambassador to Morocco Wilfried Hofmann has been formally criticized by the German Foreign Ministry for defending the rationality of Islam as a comprehensive faith for the modern man.

Hofmann, a Muslim who wrote the still unpublished book "Islam as an Alternative" has met disapproval from official circles in Germany for his attempts to highlight the dynamic facts of Islam to a Western readership fed on adverse propaganda and largely ignorant of the universality of the almighty's final revelation to mankind.

As part of their smear campaign, sections of the German media have launched strong attacks on Hoffman, prompting the author to protest the "unfounded attack" on a book whose contents are not yet available to an ordinary reader to judge.

The German Social Democratic Party has urged Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher to summon the seasoned diplomat from Morocco and dismiss him for what according to its interpretation was "violation of the principles of freedom".

On Monday, German Deputy Foreign Minister Dieter Kastrop said that Hofmann should adjust all his behaviour to what he called the "principles of freedom and democracy" in Germany, and that his religion should not influence his official duties.

Hofmann, who has been serving the German Foreign Ministry for the past 31 years, answered that he abides by the German Constitution, and his religious beliefs have never interfered with his duties as the German ambassador to Morocco.

The 61 year old diplomat who accepted the truth of Islam in 1980, believes that more activities should be undertaken towards presenting a correct understanding of Islam as a universal and humanitarian system.

His book intends to correct the false image of Islam imposed on the Western mind, and according to Hoffmann who is an expert in law and Arabic studies, the removal of such misconceptions will prove effective in reducing the North-South tension.

Pakistan

Defense Ministry Confirms Border Skirmish

BK2403164692 Hong Kong AFP in English 1536 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Islamabad, March 24 (AFP)—Pakistan confirmed Tuesday [24 March] reports of a border skirmish in the disputed state of Kashmir, but denied an Indian claim that nine Pakistani soldiers had been killed.

A Defence Ministry official said two Indian posts were destroyed in the skirmish resulting from "unprovoked firing" by the Indian troops in the "usually quiet" Chammb sector Thursday [19 March]. However, he said, calm had prevailed in the area since Sunday. There had been no casualties at all on the Pakistani side, he said, adding that the Pakistani troops were forced to retaliate.

A PRESS TRUST OF INDIA report earlier quoted Indian defence sources as saying that Pakistani troops had started firing without provocation at Indian positions. The report said the exchange of sporadic gunfire continued until Sunday in the Chammb and Mandiala sectors, leaving nine Pakistani soldiers dead with no casualties on the Indian side.

Paper Criticizes UN Statements on Kashmir

BK2403113792 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 23 Mar 92 p 6

[Editorial: "Why Double Standards, Mr. Ghali?"]

[Text] The United Nations needs the agreement of parties concerned—India and Pakistan—to move toward resolving the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Secretary General Butrus Ghali said Saturday [21 March]. Responding to questions on Kashmir at his first press conference after taking over as Secretary General on January 1, he said, "we need the approval of the two States." As if to put the issue beyond any doubt, he added, "The United Nations cannot play any role without the agreement of all protagonists of the dispute." India itself took the Kashmir issue to the UN. Now it

opposes any UN role in Kashmir, insisting that the dispute should be settled bilaterally between India and Pakistan. Some verbal concession is made to Simla agreement, but always too vaguely to be meaningful. To that only an oft repeated reply can be given, which is that the dispute continues to be under reference with the United Nations and the resolutions on Kashmir are still on the agenda of the world body. There is, therefore, no question of its being resolved only through bilateral devices. However, the latest statement by the UN chief on the subject of Kashmir does come as an absolute puzzle, if not a veritable stunner.

Mr Ghali has obviously forgotten the action most recently endorsed by the august body he heads in the matter of the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait. Public memory is not so short as to have forgotten that the UN endorsed armed action against Iraq to effect the liberation of Kuwait, which the former country had forcibly annexed. Another thing no one remembers that Iraq had even been consulted in the matter. That being most emphatically the case, it is now amazing that the UN needs the approval of both India and Pakistan before the world body can move towards resolution of the problem. It is even more surprising that Mr Ghali should choose to ignore a precedent set by the United Nations in a dispute between two countries, and not so far back in time either.

It appears that there are two countries, both members of the UN, which can get away with anything, even blue murder. The reference is to India and Israel. The former has held the people in Occupied Kashmir in tyrannical bondage since 1947 while the latter has been perpetrating all kinds of atrocities against the Palestinians ever since it came into being after the infamous Balfour Declaration. No, Mr. Ghali, these double standards will certainly not do. There should be a consistency of attitude and action on the part of the UN while dealing with disputes between any two countries even if India and Israel happen to be a party to two unresolved disputes. Otherwise, the very principles on which the world body was set up, could come, and indeed will, under serious question.

Delegation Seeking Japanese Help on Kashmir

OW2203085292 Tokyo KYODO in English 0829 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] Islamabad, March 22 KYODO—A senior Pakistani lawmaker left for Japan on Sunday [22 March], saying his group will seek Tokyo's assistance in resolving a dispute with India over Kashmir.

Wasim Sajjad, chairman of the senate, said in an airport interview he was carrying a message from Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and would explain to Japanese leaders Islamabad's position on its dispute with India over parts of Kashmir and on finding a political settlement to the Afghan civil war.

The senate leader, invited by Japan's House of Councilors, said he would seek Japanese assistance in resolving the bilateral dispute over Kashmir in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolutions.

New Delhi has maintained that the conflict, in which Muslim groups have demanded an independent Kashmir or unification with Pakistan, should be resolved bilaterally.

In the Afghan conflict, rebels fighting the Kabul government have long used rugged Pakistani terrain as their base, but Islamabad has denied taking an active military role in the fighting.

The Pakistani Government has dispatched many delegations to friendly countries to apprise their leaders of its views on Indian-held Kashmir.

During their weeklong visit, Wasim's delegation will visit Hiroshima, Kyoto, and Nara, as well as some high-technology factories.

UN Representative on Afghanistan Briefs Sharif

BK2303165392 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 23 Mar 92

[Text] The personal representative of the United Nations secretary general on Afghanistan, Mr. Benon Sevan, called on the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, in Islamabad today. Mr. Sevan, who has returned from Kabul, briefed the prime minister on preparations being made for the holding of an Afghan gathering next month for finding a solution to the Afghan problem. Mr. Sevan was informed that Pakistan authorities will continue their process of consultation with Afghan leaders to persuade them to support the United Nations process and to take advantage of the historic opportunity of establishing an Islamic interim government to replace the present regime in Afghanistan. The interim government will restore peace, arrange repatriation of refugees, and hold elections for establishment of a regular elected government.

The minister of state for foreign affairs and the secretary general of foreign affairs were present at the meeting.

Explosions Damage Gas Pipelines in South

BK2503031492 Hong Kong AFP in English 1246 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] Karachi, March 24 (AFP)—Four explosions believed to have been caused by bombs damaged gas pipelines in four cities of Pakistan's southern province of Sindh, sources in the state-owned gas company said Tuesday [24 March].

The sources said three explosions occurred in Jacobabad, Karampur and Shahdampur late Monday, cutting off gas supplies to a number of districts for several hours until alternative arrangements were made. The fourth explosion in downtown Karachi early Tuesday injured

one person and stopped supplies to one part of the port city, the sources said, adding repair work was underway.

Officials of the Sui Southern Gas Co. here said the incidents were acts of sabotage. No one immediately claimed responsibility.

Police are investigating the explosions, which follow a series of attacks by bandits this month, including rocketing of a passenger train.

Explosions Shut Pipelines

BK2503033292 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 25 Mar 92

[Text] The deputy commissioner of Jacobabad told ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN last night that the damage caused to two sections of the gas pipeline near Jacobabad have been repaired and gas supply to the Jacobabad district and the Guddu Thermal Power Station has been resumed.

According to a press note issued by the district magistrate of Sanghar, two sections of the gas pipeline, located about 15 km from Shahdampur, were damaged in explosions on 23 March. Repair work has been started and the gas supply will be resumed by this evening, the press note adds.

Paper Views Problems With Exchange Certificates

BK2403104592 Lahore THE NATION (Islamabad THE NATION Supplement) in English 23 Mar 92 p 6

[Editorial: "Bond Sale Fiasco"]

[Text] The new issue of foreign exchange bearer certificates by the Government of Pakistan has been stopped in the United States. Apparently the State Bank of Pakistan had failed to get a clearance from the US Securities and Exchange Commission, despite our government's instructions to the Bank to do so. Thus the new certificates, when advertised in the US, were labelled as a means of laundering black money, something not allowed under US law. Black money in the United States, as in other Western countries and the oil-rich Arab sheikhdoms, is synonymous with gains from the sale of illegal drugs/narcotics. In Pakistan, however, the definition of black money is slightly different. Though it can include money made from the sale of narcotics yet, by and large, it is taken to mean money gained illegally through corruption or through involvement in smuggling operations or through indulging in any activity not sanctioned by the state. Announcing in an advertisement appearing in the US Press that no questions will be asked about the identity or the source of funds of the purchaser was proof of naivety by our State Bank leaving the government open for severe criticism in the US.

True that Dr. Mahbubul Haq had also followed a similar policy a few years ago yet at that time BCCI had not collapsed, and Pakistanis working in BCCI were not yet on trial in Western courts on charges of drug money

laundering. It is also true that the present government probably needs foreign exchange much more urgently than Dr Mahbubul Haq did and thus embarked on the same venture, i.e., sale of foreign exchange bearer certificates but with such different results. However, Dr Haq did not advertise in the foreign Press whereas our present crop of politicians believe in advertising on a large scale. And where Dr Haq failed because the black money holders did not really trust his promises the present government might fail because foreign governments do. In the late 1980s, only banks within the country bought the certificates issued. Thus for the present government to adopt a policy that had not proved successful before was rather a naive step.

Further on Exchange 'Scandal'

BK2403113392 Islamabad *THE MUSLIM* in English
23 Mar 92 p 6

[Editorial: "A Scandalous Indiscretion"]

[Text] Does free economy mean free-for-all and freedom from all scruples? At least this is what some people in the Ministry of Finance and the State Bank of Pakistan seem to believe. Otherwise the invitation to lure foreign currency in exchange for the Bearers Certificates would not have been so atrociously drafted that it should offend sensibilities even in the land of runaway free enterprise that the US is. Reports from New York say Pakistani banks (the nationalised ones) were raided by the functionaries of the investigating agencies and their managerial staff subjected to all kinds of embarrassing questions regarding a shocking advertisement put out in the newspapers there for selling foreign exchange Bearer Certificates. This followed the sharp reaction of the US media about the impropriety of an open invitation for the laundering of tainted money. The special exception has apparently been taken to the highlighting of the fact that no questions would be asked about the identity of the purchaser or the source of the money used to buy lucrative certificates with. *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL* went to the extent of accusing the Pakistan Government of setting up a new network for black money and its laundering.

It is shocking that nobody in the Ministry of Finance bothered to take the needed care not to violate the regulations in force in other countries. Perhaps our new votaries of market economy are aware of the fact that even in the US, over the years regulations and constraints have been evolved to curb the lust for unbridled profits or unethical windfall gains in the Middle East. It will be a folly to dismiss such reaction in the US merely as part of a new anti-Islamic bias or the handiwork of Jewish lobby. Here is a scandal which threatens to explode like that of the BCCI whose pronounced connection with Pakistan caused such embarrassment to the country. Whatever the motivation of US detractors of the scheme, officials concerned in the State Bank of Pakistan and above all, in the Ministry of Finance, should be asked to explain their conduct which has

exposed the country to ridicule. Those who approved the advertisement are as guilty as those who authorised its insertion into national and foreign newspapers.

The State Bank of Pakistan has been a much respected institution. The Governor should have the courage to resign for bringing the institution into disrepute. The Finance Minister too owes it to the people to give a full explanation of this sordid episode. How does he justify the garnering of ill-gotten foreign exchange through such dubious means?

Economic Mismanagement Cited

BK2403112592 Peshawar *THE FRONTIER POST*
in English 23 Mar 92 p 10

[Editorial: "Another Embarrassment for Pakistan"]

[Text] The government has withdrawn sale of its foreign exchange bonds worldwide immediately admitting that the sale of its five-year foreign currency bearer certificates had been launched without clearance of the United States Securities and Exchange Commission. The government justifies the issuance of these bonds as a part of its policy to liberalise and open up the exchange and payments system that, in return, would encourage overseas Pakistanis to keep their foreign exchange within the country. On the contrary, the US media has described it as a drug money laundering device and the Senators have called it a corporate crime. In the process, Pakistan has lost yet another potential capital market for direct foreign investment.

Earlier, a big high-level mission of the Japanese investors called in question the level of transparency in the management of economic affairs by the sitting government. Needless to mention that the vigorous introduction of various reforms in the economic structure of the country is highly commendable. Performance on the implementation side, however, has so far been extremely disappointing. One major factor in this regard is impatience shown by the economic managers to achieve desired goals in the shortest possible period of time. The policy to take agile decisions without proper spadework has only resulted into their dejected reversal. Inversion of the decisions to privatise National Bank of Pakistan; to withdraw duty on the import of CKD [completely knocked down] and CBU [completely built up] condition transport vehicles; and to reduce duty on imported steel scrap are a few examples. But to mention in this regard, at best the government seems to be flying too high to reach the moon and at worst a rare opportunity to reap the fruits of liberal economic reforms is being lost.

Reported seizure of record of Pakistani banks operating in the United States and annulment of sale of foreign exchange bonds has produced disgrace for the nation and of course enormous embarrassment for the people at the helm of affairs. There is an urgent need for deliberately planned and sustained efforts to check any similar recurrence in the future. Especially, those responsible for

economic mismanagement must be taken to task by the competent authorities. A serious consideration should also be given to the possibility of injecting new blood into the higher echelons of our economic management cadres.

Khan, Sharif Address Nation on Pakistan Day

*BK2303063392 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 0200 GMT 23 Mar 92*

[Text] The nation is celebrating Pakistan Day with a renewed pledge to work for realizing the goals and objectives of the Pakistani Resolution and making the country a strong Islamic welfare state. The day dawned with a 31-gun salute in the federal capital and 21-gun salutes in all provincial capitals. Special prayers are being offered in mosques and other religious places for the country's solidarity, stability and prosperity, consolidation of democracy, unity in the Islamic world and freedom for the occupied Muslim territories. Today is a public holiday and the national flag is flying at all major official and private buildings.

The president and the prime minister in their messages on the occasions have urged the nation to work ceaselessly to revive Qaide Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's spirit of unity, faith, and discipline for building Pakistan as a great country.

In his message, President Ghulam Mohammad Ishaq reminded the countrymen that it was due to the inspiration provided by Allame Mohammad Iqbal and the

visionary and dynamic leadership of Qaide Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah that the freedom movement of the Muslims of the subcontinent was crowned with success in spite of heavy odds. He urged the people to create a collective concept and national thought by giving national interests priority to personal interests and rising above all types of acrimony to reach the heights of success and glory envisaged in the Pakistan Resolution.

Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif in his message said the present government has put the country on the path that leads to self-reliance, self-sufficiency, self-confidence, and self-respect. Referring to the glorious traditions and customs of the nation, he regretted that we have thrown into the background those goals and objectives for which our ancestors created a free state. He said rather than finding fault with each other, we should immediately engage ourselves in fulfilling tasks. The prime minister called upon the countrymen to rise above self-interest and suppress their differences to defend the country's interest to pave the way for the national stability and prosperity.

The provincial governors and chief ministers have also issued similar messages.

The joint parade of the armed forces, which was to be held in front of the Parliament building this morning, has been canceled due to heavy rains in Islamabad. However, the parades will be held in all provincial capitals according to the program.